

ILLUSTRATED
A G R A
GUIDE

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PREFACE

Agra, the city of the Taj, has its own position in the history of the world. In this illustrated guide book we have dealt also with a brief history of the great Moghuls as it clearly reflects the great buildings and monuments of the city—Taj Mahal of world fame, Agra Fort, Etma-ud-daula's Tomb, Akbar's Tomb and Fatehpur Sikri. We are much grateful to many persons, who have helped us in the compilation of the book.

Attempt has been made in this book to give enough information for the tourist. But no claim to the finality can be laid. Suggestions to its improvement will be much appreciated.

Publishers

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THE CITY OF AGRA

Agra is one of the most important, historical and ancient cities of India. This handsome town is situated in the holy region of Brij Bhoomi, on the right bank of river Yamuna. In ancient days the city was fortified having sixteen gates and it was the frontier defence of the Aryans.

Five thousand years ago, during the days of Mahabharata, the city was known as Agraban. Some historians are of the opinion that it was founded by Maharaja Ugersen and was named after his own name. After that the name was spoilt and lastly was known as Agra. Anyhow Agra is in fact an ancient city.

In the year 1475 A. D. Badal Singh, a Kshatriya hero had built a fort for defence against Mohammedan invasions and called it as Badalgarh. (Emperor Akbar after demolishing the Badalgarh acquired the same place for construction of his grand fort.) Afterwards in 1492 A. D. Sikander Lodi of the Lodi dynasty inhabited a city known as Sikandera, which is at a distance of five miles from the present city. In 1526 A. D. Baber, the great Moghul defeated the last king of Lodi dynasty— Ibrahim Lodi and Agra also went into the hands of the Moghuls. Though Baber did not much appreciate Agra as his head quarter of the empire because he had

come from a cold place and it was a very hot place for him, but still he preferred to let remain Agra as the capital of his empire. Later on Emperor Akbar founded the present city in 1566 A. D. Thereafter during 100 years it rose into prominence and developed a great deal.

Agra is a very heavy railway junction of Great Indian Peninsula Railway, Bombay Baroda & Central India Railway and East India Railway, connecting this city with all the important places of the country. It has four main railway stations as Agra Fort, Agra City, Raja-Ki-Mandi and Agra Cantonment. It has got an excellent aerodrome. As Agra has its own University it is a great centre of education. It contains a large number of hotels, restaurants, clubs, banks, colleges, libraries and hospitals etc.

Agra City is very much famous for its arts and crafts. Stone work of this place has acquired world-wide fame. It is renowned for its pure silken fabrics, leather works, daris and carpets. Embroideries worked with silk, gold and silver threads is the excellent industry of the city. Models of the Taj exquisted in marble are sent to every nook and corner of the world.

Being an old city its streets and lanes are narrow and crowdy. But the suberb areas being open and spacious have uptodate, airy and stylish buildings. The city has been far extended and is now becoming prosperous and populous gradually.

AGRA AND THE MOGHULS

History clarifies the position that Agra was an unimportant place before the reign of the Moghuls.



*Taimur the
founder of Moghul
dynasty*

During the rule of the Moghuls only it rose into its permanent prominence. All the history of Agra is well connected with the history of the Moghul Emperors. Emperor Akbar founded the city; during Emperor Jehangir's reign it developed a great deal; thereafter it reached its zenith during Shahjehan's time but perished with Aurangzeb, the last mighty ruler of the Moghul

dynasty. It is therefore necessary to know something about the Moghuls before going through the royal buildings of the city of Agra.

BABER

Mohummed Zahir-Ud-Din Baber of Taimur dynasty, the king of Kabul after defeating Ibrahim Lodi at the great battle of Panipat occupied the cities of Agra and Delhi. Baber sent his eldest son Humayun to capture the city of Agra fully. Humayun being a man of kind temprament was received warmly and the widow queen of the Raja of Gwalior who was slained at Panipat presented to him the world liked diamond Koh-i-noor.

As the looted property was too much Baber distributed it amongst his generals, chiefs and sons. To each citizen of Kabul he sent something or the other.



Baber

Baber invaded India not only as a raider, but his intention was to establish the Moghul Empire in the vast country 'India' so he remained here. He had now to face the Rajput chiefs. On the day of 16th March, 1527 a dashing battle was fought against the famous Rajput warrior, Maharana Sangram Singh "Hindu Surya

Rana Sanga" at Bayana, which is at a distance of 31 miles from Agra. The Rana answered well on the Moghul charges. It is said that having eighty wounds in his body he still continued fighting with the enemy. Baber secured victory over Rana only by strategy and the help of a traitor. After winning this battle he became the Emperor of the country. Afterwards he laid out many pleasure grounds, gardens, wells, lakes and artificial streams in the country and constructed a grand road from Agra to Kabul.

A strange story is being related about the death of Emperor Baber. It is said that once his eldest son Humayun fell seriously ill. Baber was much upset and asked *Mullahs* for some advice, on which they advised him to give away his dearest thing as alm. Baber

understood that their intention was for the Koh-i-noor. But he told them that he was even ready to give up his life for the sake of his son. He walked three times round the bed of the sufferer and prayed to God to transfer the disease to him. From the moment Humayun began to recover and only after some days on 12th December, 1530 the Emperor Baber died. His remains were temporarily kept in Aram Bagh, near Itma-Ud-Daulla, the garden which he had constructed. From there they were transported to Kobul for burial as per his desire.

HUMAYUN

Humayun succeeded Baber at the age of 23 in 1530 A. D. He was crowned at the palace in Badalgarh.

According to the instructions of his father he was very much generous and kind to his brothers. But his brothers did not help him in his bad days. Humayun spent his whole life-time in troubles. In 1540 A. D. Sher Shah Suri, the governor of Bihar rebelled against him and conquered Bengal. Emperor Humayun went to Bengal to chastise him, but in the mid-night Sher Shah invaded the royal army and Humayun was



Humayun

compelled to fly for his life. While retreating through the desert of Sindh, Akbar was born on the day of 15th

Oct. 1542 at Amarkot. Humayun had become so poor that he could bestow no gifts upon his companions. A pot of *Musk* lying near him, he opened it and distributed the musk among his friends saying "God grant that fame and glory of my son may spread like this scent upon the air".

After the death of Sher Shah Suri, in 1555 A. D. Humayun returned back again with Persian army and after defeating Sikander Shah Suri at Sirhind recaptured Agra and Delhi. But Emperor Humayun could not long enjoy the throne as he expired soon in 1556 by falling off from a staircase in the Purana Qila at Delhi. He was also buried in a magnificent masaleum just near that.

AKBAR

Akbar was still a lad of 14 when he ascended the throne. For 4 years he remained under the guardianship of Bairam Khan, the faithful general of Humayun. Later on Bairam Khan became so harsh and cruel by nature that Akbar had to announce himself as an administrator himself. On 16 Bairam Khan rebelled against him, but quickly repenting he was allowed by Akbar to go to Mecca. Emperor Akbar won respect of many Hindu rulers also but Maharana Udai Singh of Mewar refused to ally himself with



Akbar

the Moghuls. His son Maharana Pratap also did the same and had to wage wars with Akbar for his whole life and even then he did not admit defeat. In the end with the monetary help of Bhama Shah a companion indeed brave Pratap took back some of his lost fortresses.

Emperor Akbar had nine gems in his court who were very capable men. Raja Man Singh, Todar Mal, Beerbal, Faizi and Abul Fazal were the main factors, who were establishing his vast empire firmly. Akbar was very much interested in religious matters. On each Friday at Fatehpur Sikri he used to have discussions with the representatives of Parsis, Jains, Budhists, Christians, Brahmins, Shias and Sunnis etc. After taking their views, he found solace in a mysterious combination of all religions and proclaimed it a *Din-i-Illahi*, but this new religion did not *prolong* very much. It is told that Emperor Akbar had 5,000 wives in harem, which shows that he was a man of luxurious nature.

During the reign of Akbar the city of Agra rose into a great prominence. Abul Fazal, one of the nine Jewels of Akbar's court has given an account in *Ain-i-Akbari*: "Agra is a great city having esteemed healthy air. For five *kose*, the river Yamuna runs through it. Pleasant houses and gardens, inhabited by people of all nations and exhibited with the productions of every climate are built on both banks of the river. A castle of red sand stone, like of which no traveller has ever seen, has been erected by the Emperor. The fort alone contains five

at the age of 57 years and was buried at Lahore on the bank of river Ravi.

SHAH JEHAN

On the death of Emperor Jehangir Nurjehan proclaimed Shaheryar as the Emperor. But in 1628 A. D. Prince Khurram with the help of Mahabat Khan and his father-in-law Asaf-ud-daula put Shaheryar to death and ascended the throne under the title of Shah Jehan. Nur Jehan was retired and got her annual pension.



Shah Jehan

Shah Jehan was very much fond of building edifices, palaces and monuments. He constructed the most magnificent masaleum

for his beloved consort Mumtaz Mahal. Beside this he erected many mosques and palaces at Agra, for which the city is indebted to him very much. He founded Shahjehanbad, the present Delhi, and constructed there many grand buildings such as Red Fort and Jaina Masjid. He also shifted the capital of his empire from Agra to Delhi.

Emperor Shah Jehan made for himself the marvellous *Takht-i-Taus* at the cost of 9 crores of rupees, which specify his glory and grandeur. The throne itself was 6 feet by 4 feet and was built of gold weighing 1 lakh tolas.

Its upper portion was inlaid with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires and other valuable gems and the lower one was of gold, set with topazes. On an enamelled tree one wonderful peacock, adorned with bright gems was constructed. The ceiling of the throne was also set with diamonds with a border of glorious pearls. Some fancy verses were written in it with green enamel. The throne was supported by twelve emerald coloured stones and to ascend the throne a beautiful silver-made staircase was prepared. It is said that this wonderful throne was carried off to Persia by Nadir Shah in 1739 and there it was melted down.

The last period of Shah Jehan's life was spent very unprosperously. He was seized by a sudden illness and was imprisoned at Agra fort in 1657 by his youngest son Aurangzeb. Dara Shikoh, his eldest and the dearest son was taken as a prisoner and was murdered harshly. Aurangzeb treated his other brothers Shujah and Murad also in the same manner and put them to death. Only Jehan Ara Begum, the favourite daughter of Shah Jehan lived with him for his whole life and no body else was allowed to meet her. Even her letters were opened by Aurangzeb personally before their delivery. He used to spend his whole time in reading Quran and in repeating the prayers. Aurangzeb did not present himself before him even on his death as he was then at Delhi. A few days before his death Shah Jehan even pardoned his cruel and cunning son Aurangzeb.

On Monday the 22nd January, 1666 A. D. he asked

his daughter Jehan Ara to raise his head so as to enable him to have the last look on the Masauleum of his beloved Empress (As the Taj is seen clearly from the place where he was lying.) He told her daughter his last wish that his remains should be buried by the side of Mumtaz Mahal. On his death Jehan Ara wept bitterly and the ladies of the harem sobbed very much.

Aurangzeb reached Agra in the next month. All good deeds that he performed were to make Jehan Ara as the Chief Lady of the Court and fitted a marble enclosure in place of silver around his parent's canotaphs. Jehan Ara died in 1681 A. D. fifteen years after the death of her father and was buried near the Shrine of Sheikh Salim Chisti in Delhi.

AURANGZEB ALAMGIR

On 26th May, 1659, Aurangzeb ascended the throne in Delhi and assumed the title of Alamgir. In

the first instance he did his best to please the subject and the Chiefs, so that there might not be a chance of any sort of revolt and ill feelings against him. But when he succeeded in his work he changed himself altogether. He was an orthodox Muslim. His treatment towards Hindus was inhuman. He pulled down their temples and on the very spots built the mosques out of the temple's material. He forced



Aurangzeb

them to convert themselves as Muslims and imposed the terrible *Jazia* tax over them. Aurangzeb got murdered. Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Govind Singh's two sons were buried alive in the walls. He did his best to sweep off all other religions in order to flourish Islam, by which the Rajputs, Sikhs and Marhattas, all were against him and did never let him sleep peacefully. Most of his time was spent in the South as he had to check the rebels of Great Marahatta Chief Shivaji.

Emperor Aurangzeb was not at all interested in any art. Even he was disliked by Muslims due to his suspicious and brutal nature. The most favourites amongst his family members were two, one his sister, Roshnara who helped him in getting the throne and the other Zebun-nissa, his most blooming daughter but he had no trust even in them. At the old age of 90 he died at Ahmad Nagar and was buried there.

DOWN FALL OF THE MOGHUL EMPIRE

Brutal Nature of Aurangzeb and his successors inability brought the sudden downfall of the Moghul Empire. After his death his son and grandsons sat on the throne upto 1719. Later on the successor Moham-med Shah ascended throne and collected round him a number of bad companions and began to live a life of pleasure. In such vicissitudes India was invaded by Nadir Shah from Persia in 1739 A. D. At reaching Delhi he imprisoned the Emperor, ravaged the prosperous empire and shed blood of the innocent public. He

returned with very many ornaments, Jewels, World famous diamond Koh-i-noor, Peacock Throne of Shah Jehan, enormous wealth of 32 crores of rupees to Persia.

Nadir Shah's invasion weakened the Moghul Empire and the position became quite insecure. In 1758 A. D. Marhattas occupied the Agra City. During 1761-74 Jats of Bhartpur, Suraj Mal as their chief became Supreme at Agra, who plundered the Imperial city and scrapped off the valuables from the royal buildings. Thereafter Marahattas rose again and the city was captured by Mahadeji Sindhia upto 1803. On 18th October, 1803 A. D. Lord Lake defeated the Marhattas and occupied the fort of Agra. During British rule Agra was made the capital of North Western Province (Now known as the United Provinces), but soon after the Mutiny of 1857, the Capital of the United Provinces was shifted from Agra to Allahabad.

Though the city of Agra had to see many ups and downs but even now when the Visitors look at Agra, its fort, palaces and monuments the scenes of Moghul Empire at once come before their eyes.

Lady of the Taj

The lady of the Taj beloved consort of the world renowned Emperor Shah Jehan, Arjumand Banoe Begum, better known by her title Mumtaz Mahal was born in 1592 A. D. A Persian by descent, she was the daughter of Asaf Khan, the Prime Minister in Emperor

Jehangir's court and the brother of Nur Jehan. During her childhood also she was very good and charming. She was very well educated by her father, who brought her up very affectionately. When youth bloomed to her then Prince Khurran liked her very much and wished to marry her. Emperor knew it and did not object to establish their loving relations. She was married to him and the Emperor himself gave her the title of Mumtaz Mahal, Exalted of the Palaces.

Though Mumtaz Mahal was Shah Jehan's second wife but her feminine grace, dignity of heart and wit



proved so powerful that Shah Jehan's all affections were soon transferred to his new bride. Their impassionate love made them inseparable companions both in the palaces as well as in the courts. Mumtaz Mahal became to Shah Jehan in a manner what Nur Jehan had been to Jehangir, but there was a vast difference between these two

loves. Mumtaz Mahal was a devoted and loving wife. She did never like to interfere her husband in administrative and political affairs like Nur Jehan, but occasionally was glad to give her wise opinions as and when required by her husband. Shah Jehan was also not a puppet in her hands and knew well his responsibilities. He was a ruler himself in the court and a loving husband for Mumtaz Mahal in the Harem only.

In 1631 A. D. the second year of his accession, he had to go to Deccan in order to check rebels of Khan Jehan Lodi. Empress Mumtaz Mahal also accompanied him in the campaign. At that time she gave birth to a daughter and unfortunately, due to some disorder in the system, she looked despairingly at her lord. At this the Emperor was shocked too much. His heart was sunk with grief and face grew pale. Seeing such a fearful condition of the Emperor the beloved Empress, was also much grieved and took his hands into her own hands. The Emperor weepingly said to the Empress, "How can I show the world that I really love you, Mumtaz!" On it she requested him to take good care of her children and not to marry again after her death. She further impressed upon him with a humble request to commemorate her memory by constructing a unique tomb. The Emperor in deep sorrow agreed to what was requested by his dear wife. Alas! on the day of 17th June, 1631 Mumtaz Mahal closed her eyes at a short age of 39 before her broken hearted lover.

According to his promises Emperor Shah Jehan even did not think of his another marriage and treated his all children affectionately and mercifully. The Queen's allowance of 6 lacs was immediately transferred to Jehan Ara, who was the most favourite child of the deceased queen and the Emperor. About half of the jewels and ornaments belonging to the queen were given to Jehan Ara and the rest of her property was distributed between her other children. According to the last wish of his beloved consort Emperor Shah Jehan at once commenced to build her tomb and on completion this unique edifice arose such which can never be described.

After the death of Empress Mumtaz Mahal for several days the whole empire went into mourning. All of a sudden the sad news spread all over the country. Shah Jehan was so much grieved that his mind was upset, he was even prepared to give up his throne and wished to die which he of course could not do. For several weeks he did not appear at the *Jerokha* to conduct state business. For days he could not meet with the court nobles even. For complete 2 years he abstained from all kinds of pleasures and amusements. On the festivals and functions at the memory of the deceased queen he used to weep bitterly. In a short time his hair became grey and he was too weak. Whenever he entered the queen's apartments tears came out of his eyes. For a long time he could not forget her though possible efforts were made. On each Friday he went on foot to the Empress's grave and himself read *Fatiha*.

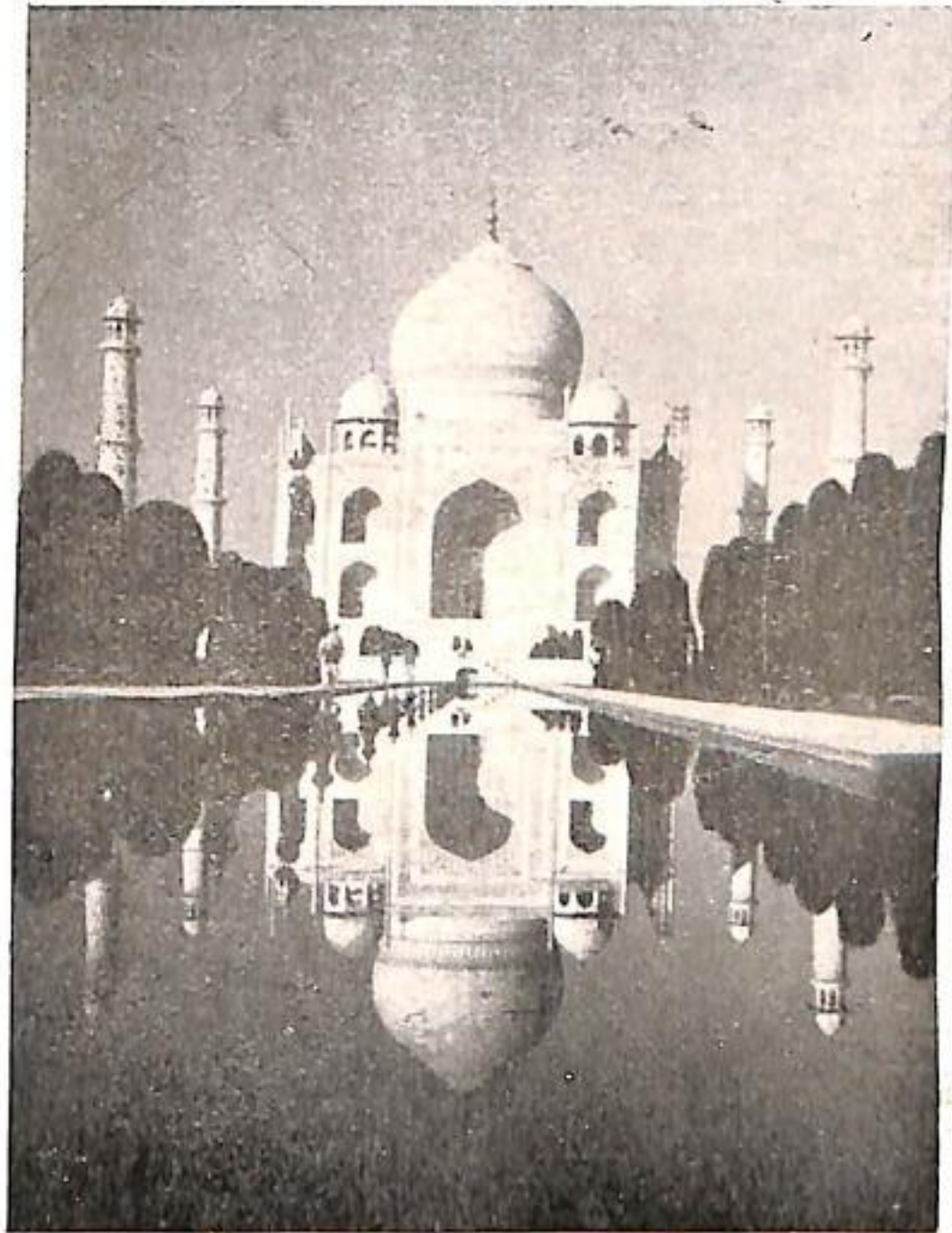
TAJ MAHAL

Taj Mahal, the glory of Agra is well renowned in the country as well as abroad. The matchless, peerless and gracious edifice stands on the right bank of river Jamuna at a distance of a mile and a half from Agra City.

If Shah Jehan—great king though he was—could not keep his peerless wife alive, he had at any rate made up his mind to immortalise her memory in a manner to which the world would present no parallel. He built such a monument over his beloved's dry bones which would have been the crown of all the palaces.

A number of designers were asked for from the great artists of the world. The historians differ with each other with regard to the original design of the Taj. The European Historians are of the opinion that Gerónimo Veroneo of Italy or Austin De Bordeaux an artist of France planned the Taj while the Indian penmen produce their view condemning the Europeans. They write that a famous artist of Shiraz had planned a design of the tomb for his own beloved whom he loved *deeply*. By chance he met with the Emperor who liked the design very much and appointed him as a designer

and architect for the construction of his consort's masaleum. Any how in 1630 A. D. a wooden model was prepared and passed by the Emperor before the original tomb was started.



The lady of the Taj died at Barhanpur in the south, so her remains were temporarily deposited in the garden

of Zenabad near the Tapti river where the Moghuls *were encamped* in those days. After six months the remains were transferred to Agra under the supervision of Prince Shuja. Under the orders of the Emperor numberless alms to the poor were distributed all along the way from Barhanpur to Agra. At Agra the remains were kept in the garden of Raja Man Singh of Jaipur. The same sight was very much appreciated by Shah Jahan and it was thus acquired from Raja Jai Singh, the successor of Raja Man Singh, who was given some other place in exchange for it.

Gradually the great masaleum was started to be built. Besides the great designers and architects of India a number of renowned artisans of Turkey and Iran etc. were called for to plan and construct the glorious edifice. A list of artists who were employed by Shah Jehan for construction of the Taj Mahal is given below :—

Name	Residence	Profession	Pay p. m.
1 Mohummad Isa Afuadi	Turkey	Draftsman	100
2 Sattar Khan	"	Caligrapher	100
3 Mohammad Sharif	Samarkand	Designer	100
4 Mohammad Haneef	Akharabad (Agra)	Supervisor of the masons	100
5 Amanat Khan	Shiraz	Thghra writer	100

6 Kadir Zeman Khan	Arabia	General Artist	800
7 Chiranji Lal	Delhi	Mosaicist	800
8 Baldev Das	Multan	Specialist in Flowers making	690
9 Mannoo Lall	Lahore	Inlayer	680
10 Jamuna Das	Delhi	"	600
11 Abdulla	"	Mason	675
12 Bashrat Ali	"	Inlayer	632
13 Bhagwan Das	Multan	"	630
14 Mohammad Yusuf Khan	Delhi	"	600
15 Chhotey Lal	Multan	"	600
16 Jhoomar Lal	"	"	600
17 Abdul Gaffar	"	Caligrapher	600
18 Whab Khan	Persia	"	600
19 Amir Ali	Multan	Flower Maker	600
20 Mohummad Sajjad	Balakh	Mason	550
21 Ismail Afuadi	Turkey	Dome Maker	500
22 Mohummad Khan	Baghdad	Caligrapher	500
23 Mohummad Sadiq	Delhi	Mason	500
24 Ata Mohammad	Bukhara	Sculpture	500
25 Abu Yusuf	Delhi	Inlayer	500
26 Abu Turab Khan	Multan	Mason	500
27 Shakrullah	"	Gultrash	475
28 Roshan Khan	Syria	Caligrapher	400
29 Shivji Lal	Multan	Inlayer	342
30 Manohar Dass	"	"	295
31 Qazim Khan	Lahore	Turret Maker	295

32 Madho Rani	"	Inlayer	273
33 Chinta Mani	Multan	"	252
34 Bansi Dhar	"	"	244
35 Heera Mani	"	"	234
36 Manohar Singh	Lahore	"	200
37 Mohan Lal	Kanauj	"	200

Twenty thousand workmen laboured continuously for a period of 10 years and 6 months. A little colony, known as Taj Ganj grew up for these labourers. The streets in it were named after the names of big architects. Precious stones, gold and silver in abundance were received from kings and chiefs in the country and abroad. Besides these different kinds of stones, wood and other materials were brought from far off countries a list of which is as follows:—

Name	Place from where brought	No. of pieces
1. Cornelian (<i>Aqiq</i>)	Baghadad	540
2. Turquoise (<i>Fireza</i>)	Tibbet	670
3. Coral (<i>Moonga</i>)	River Soan	142
4. Lapis Lazuli (<i>Lajward</i>)	Ceylon	242
5. Onyx (<i>Sulemani</i>)	The Deccan	559
6. Pitunia	Unknown	459
7. Golden Stone (<i>Tilai</i>)	"	Unknown
8. Black Marble (<i>Moosa</i>)	Surat	1075
9. Ajuba	The Channel	Unknown
10. Reg	Makrana	27
11. Alabaster (<i>Rukam</i>)	Sal algarh	Unknown

12. Nakhud	Gwalior	82
13. Magnaties (<i>Makhnalis</i>)	Unknown	77
14. Sandstone (<i>Bansi</i>)	"	34
15. Gulabi	"	76
16. Jadwar	"	95
17. Jasper (<i>Yashah</i>)	Cambay	54
18. Sapphire (<i>Neelam</i>)	Unknown	74
19. Emerald (<i>Panna</i>)	"	42
20. Bloodstone (<i>Abri</i>)	Gwalior	427
21. Melachile (<i>Dehaul Farang</i>)	Russia	619
22. Ghorri	Cambay	Unknown
23. Carnet (<i>Tamra</i>)	The Ganges	52
24. Arabia Felix (<i>Yamni</i>)	Yaman	230
25. Pai Zahar	Kumayun	616
26. Chrysolite (<i>Lahsunia</i>)	The Nile	Unknown
27. Khara	The Yamuna	677
28. Crystal (<i>Biloor</i>)	Hyderabad Deccan	74
29. Paukhani	Balekh	87
30. Godar	Gwalior	1600
31. Marble	Jaipur	92
32. Sumag	Arabia	575
33. Khattoo	Jesalmere	340
34. Ruby (<i>Mani</i>)	Badakshan	142
35. Diamond (<i>Heera</i>)	Panna (Central India)	625
36. Couch Shell (<i>Shankh</i>)	Ocean	44
37. Pearls (<i>Moti</i>)	"	50
38. Mother of Pearl (<i>Seep</i>)	"	Unknown
39. Red Stone (<i>Surkh</i>)	Gwalior	648

40. Ghar	Jubbulpore	Unknown
41. Cloudy Stone (<i>Badal</i>)	Dhabalpur	65
42. Topaz (<i>Pukhraj</i>)	Unknown	97
43. Red Marble (<i>Sange Surkh</i>)	Fatehpur Sikri	Unknown

Emperor Shah Jehan was a kind hearted man. He did not employ any one forcibly and also did not pay any one even a single pice less than what he deserved. At that time the royal treasury was full but he assigned 30 lakh rupees, the annual income of thirty villages for this purpose.

It is not clear how much expenditure was incurred on the erection of the Taj. It is estimated that 3 crores of rupees were spent on the masoleum and its adjacent buildings. The native accounts dealing with the masoleum only give the cost at Rs. 1,84,65,186, Rupees 86,09,760 were from the Emperor's personal and rest was from the contributions by Rajas and Nawabs and taxes.

It is said that when the building was completed it was full of thousands of scaffoldings. Emperor Shah Jehan was anxious to see the masoleum. On asking as how long these scaffoldings would take to be untied, he was told that it would take months or years to untie all of them. According to the advice of the Prime Minister, the Emperor gave permission to the public to untie the scaffolding and take for themselves. The people put their best efforts and in a day only the place was cleared.

Taj Mahal is surrounded by red sand stone huge walls with arcaded cloisters. The enclosure has three main gates on its south, east and west. The main gates are covered with brass and copper sheets and the others are of plain wood.

Southern Gate—This gate faces the Taj Gunj and is meant for pedlars only. On both sides of this gate are many rooms. On the right hand side of the gate is a tomb of red sand stone surrounded by courtyards and crowned with a dome. Underneath the tomb is the grave of one of the lady companions of Mumtaz Mahal and so the building is called as the tomb of a Maid of Honour. On the other side of the gate also another building of the same type is built.

Eastern Gate—The gate faces towards Fatehabad and is like the Southern Gate. Near this gate is a domed tomb erected on a platform. The tomb was built for Sirhindi Begum, one of Emperor Shah Jehan's wives. Its building is eight sided having 24 arches, one hall and a verandah. Outside the gate is the royal constable.

Western Gate—It is the common entrance to the Taj and faces towards Agra city and cantt. Outside the gate is a red sand stone edifice known as Fatehpuri Mosque. Fatehpuri Begum was also one of the wives of Shah Jehan. This mosque is 103 feet by 55 feet and there is space for 176 worshippers in it. On the left hand side of the gate is a beautiful tomb of Satuinnisa.

Khanan, the favourite lady companion of Mumtaz Mahal and governess to Jehan Ara Begum. It is known that she had no issue and died in 1647 A. D. at Lahore, from where her dead body was brought here in 1649 A. D. Emperor Shah Jehan built this marble tomb for her after spending Rs. 30,000. A grave is there in the centre of an eight sided hall and its walls and ceilings are decorated with colourful paintings.

After passing through the Western Gate there comes a courtyard 971 feet by 410 feet. In Moghul days here was the royal inn and a splendid bazaar was held. In the inn were 128 rooms for travellers and poormen, the expenditure for whom was met from the royal treasury. Now here is only a grass pedastal and a road in the middle.

Taj Gate—In front of the courtyard stands the grand portal of red sand stone on a platform 211 feet by 86 feet. It is a splendid structure having three storeys. It rises to a height of 100 feet above the ground level and is 151 feet in width. There are four fine corners at each corner. On three sides of it are strong balconies.

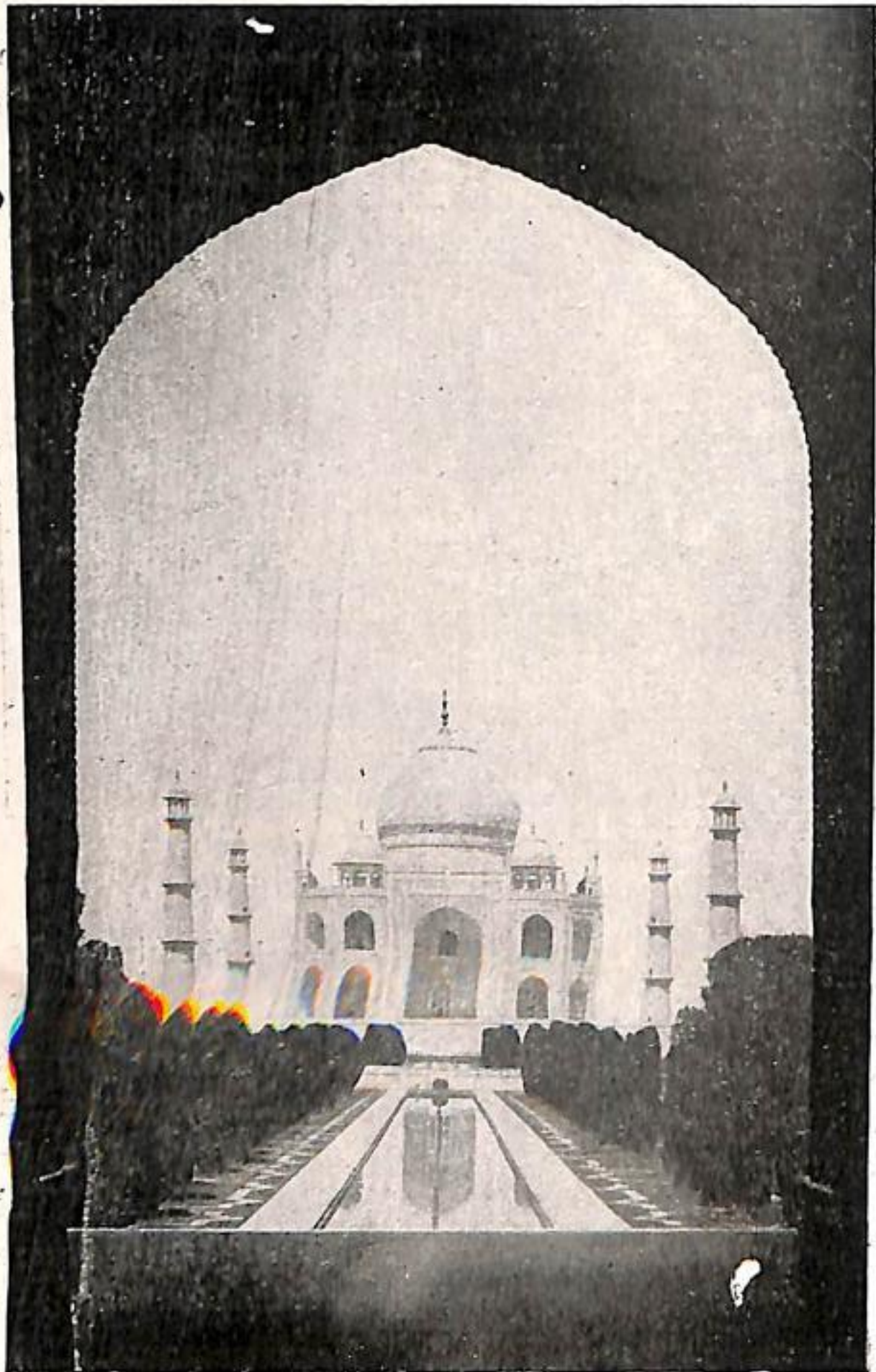
The gate is nicely inscribed with Quranic texts in black letters *in a manner they do not appear any bigger at the bottom than they are at the top*, 80 feet high. The arches of the gate are inlaid with mosaic work. During Shah Jehan's reign the gate possessed silver doors of Rs. 1,27,000 value. These were studded with 1,100 nails each with a head made of different

types of silver coins. These doors are said to have been melted down by jats during their reign. Afterwards the doors made of bronze were fitted by English.



Gateway: Taj Mahal, Agra

The entrance opens into an octagonal chamber. At each side is a fenced recess with a room and each corner there is a staircase leading upto the above storey with puzzling passages. Its top commands a grand panoramic view of the neighbourhood of the Taj. In the centre of the roof is a sixteen sided terrace. The top in all contains 4 bouquets, 22 turrets and 4 towers. The eleven small turrets in the middle greatly increase the beauty of the structure. On the western wall of the gate is written "Completed by grace of God in 1057



Taj from the Entrance

A. H. (1641 A. D.) The work on the inner side of the gate is similar to its outer side. On both sides of the entrance are two red stone *Baradaris* each measuring 73 feet long, 12 feet wide and 37 feet high and having three storeyed beautiful towers at their corners.

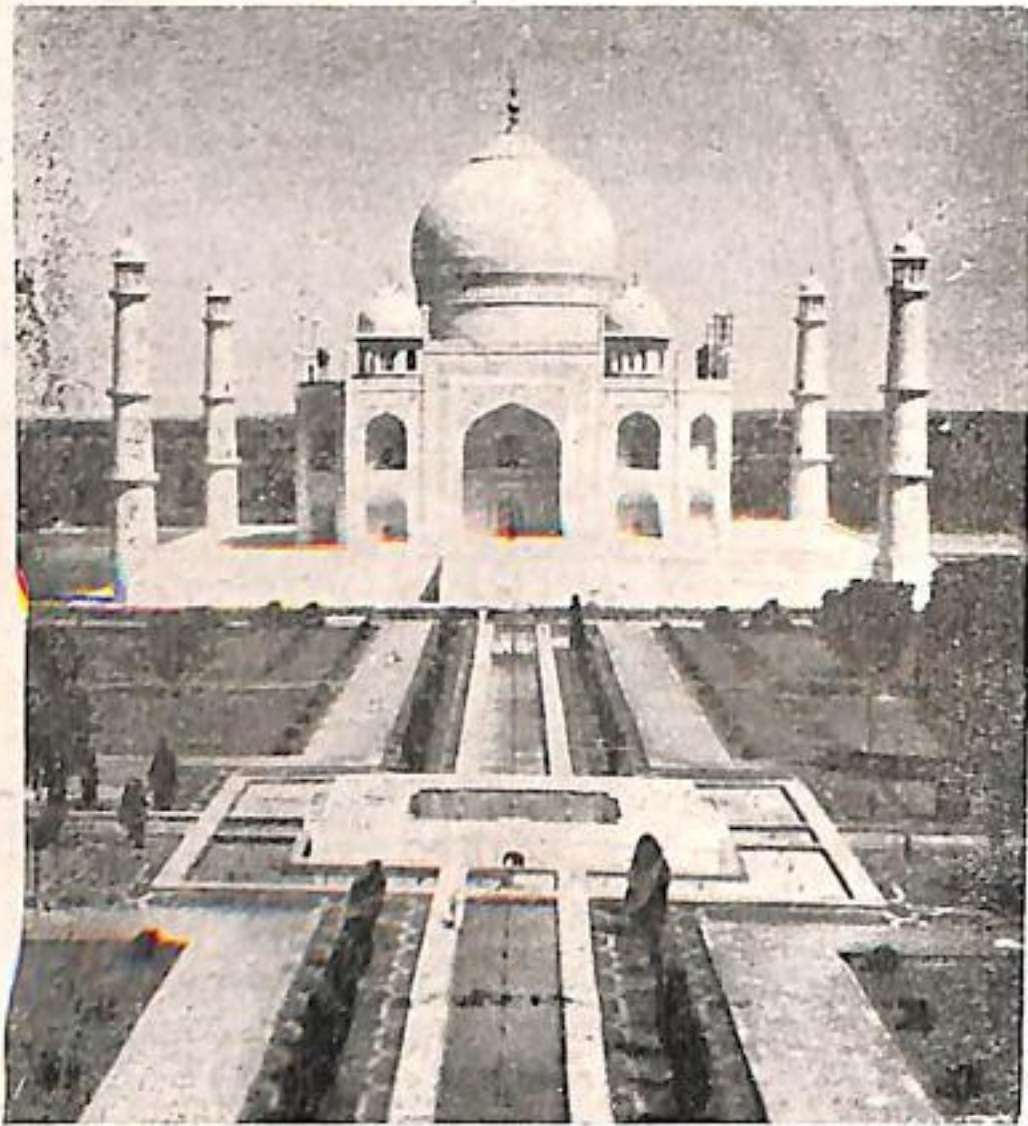
The vaulted roof inside the entrance is of red colour painted with white ink. In the centre hangs a beautiful brass lantern of Persian style. It was presented by Lord Curzon in 1909 A. D. who spent £ 350 and brought it from Persia. On the left hand side is the Taj Museum, where good many pictures of the Taj and the interesting sights of Agra City can be seen.

Taj Garden—Down the steps of the Taj Gate there is the Taj Garden, rectangular in shape and measuring 1800 feet from north to south and 1000 feet from east to west. Its style is alike the other Moghul Gardens; the masaleum in centre and canals, fountains and tanks etc. around it. From the gate onward there are paved causeways on either sides between a double row of cypress trees. Two canals $16\frac{1}{4}$ feet wide run straight to the masaleum, the distance of which is 412 feet.

In the middle there is a beautiful reservior of marble. It is 74 feet long 73 feet wide and 5 feet deep. It remains always full with water and seems to be very beautiful with lotus flowers and their big leaves floating over the water. It is stocked with fish of various colours. The reflection of the Taj in it appears very charming and infact it increases the splendour of the

masauleum. The scene of the Taj in it during the full moonlight once looked can never be forgotten. There are four benches to sit on the margin of the reservior.

The Taj Garden would have been a most beautiful spot during Moghul days when innumerable varieties of flowers delighted the scene. Each and every kind of

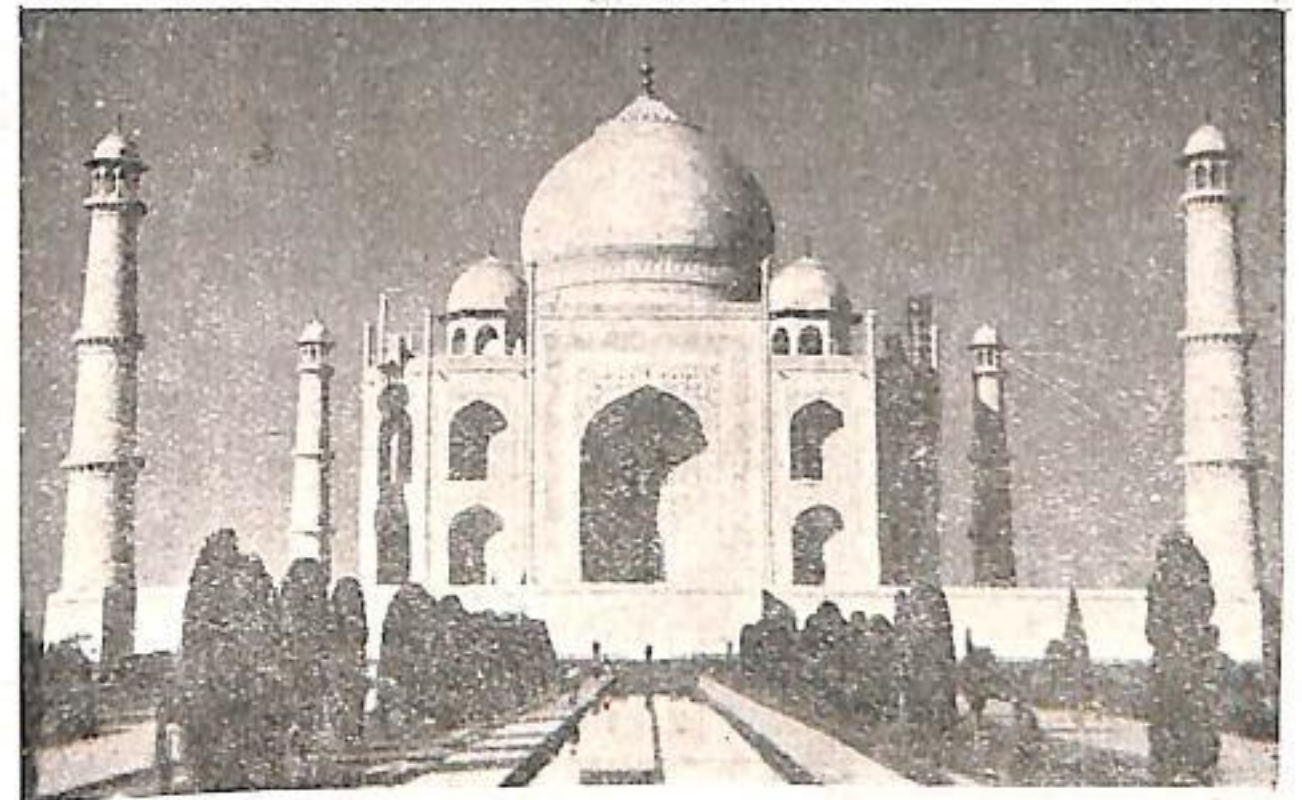


Taj Garden

fruit and flower was grown here. None of the trees and flower beds of that time remain except of 'simul tree which stands just like a true friend of the Taj.

From the Taj Garden the beauty of the masauleum appears to be very delightful. In it the visitors sit for hours and remind the tragic story of its builder.

Taj Masuleum—The grand masauleum of fine marble stands on a double platform, the first is of red sand stone, $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet high above the ground and the second



Taj Mahal

marble platform 18 feet higher than the first and measures 313 feet square. There are two staircases, each having 22 stairs. The upper platform is paved with squares black and white.

Taj Mahal, a house not made with hands, world renowned wonderful monument, a fairy palace raised by some genie of Arabian Nights Tales has been described

by many visitors, artists and writers, some of the ideas of whom are given below :—

Bernier, the French traveller, who when seeing this within 50 years of its erection observed "I must needs say that I believe it ought to be reckoned amongst the wonders of the world rather than those unshapen masses of the Egyptian Pyramids, which I was weary to see after I had seen them twice, and in which I find nothing without, but pieces of great stone ranged in form of steps one upon another, and within nothing but very little art and invention".

Samuel Smith, Member of the Parliament of England in his book writes "No words can describe it. We felt that all previous sights were dimmed in comparison. No such effect is produced by the first view of St. Peter's or Milan or Cologne Cathedrals; they are all majestic but this is enchantment itself. So perfect is the form that all other structures seem clumsy. The first impression is that of a temple of white ivory draped in *white Brussels lace*. The exquisite carving and tracery on the walls look like lace rather than sculptures. A beautiful dome crowns this building and four graceful minarets stand at each angle some distance apart, they remind one of the Eddystone Light House built of white marble."

A writer observes: "While the sepulchral works adorning the valley of the Nile will be regarded as wonders of art for their solidity of construction and

sublimity of conception; the Taj at Agra shall always call forth the admiration of mankind for its being the most exquisite specimen of human architecture and the most gorgeous romance of wedded love."

His Royal Highness Albert Edward, Prince of Wales remarked: "Most writers who have tried their hands at a description of the Taj set out with the admission that it is indescribable, and then proceed to give some ideas" of it.

"I asked my wife," says Major General Sleeman in his *Rambles and Recollections*, "when she had gone over

it, what she thought of the building. 'I cannot,' said she, 'tell you what I think, for I know not how to criticise such a building, but I can

tell you what I feel. I would die tomorrow to have such another over me."



Taj from River side

A well-known admirer, Mr. G. W. Forrest says— "No building has been more often described, drawn and photographed. But no drawing or photograph can give any idea of so rich and poetical a subject. No

description can shadow forth the whole, combined out of marble dome, fair minarets, and fragrant garden. Words cannot express the multitudinous richness of its ornamentation, perfection of form and minuteness of decoration, each lending assistance to the other. This is true charm of the Taj. It is like unto one of those daughters of gods, who were most divinely fair”.

Bayard Taylor remarks. “If there is nothing else in India, this alone would repay the journey. The distant view of this matchless edifice satisfied me that its fame is well deserved. So pure, so gloriously perfect did it appear, that I almost feared to approach it lest the charm should be broken.”

Holy and profane men, poets, prosers and practical people, all write of the Taj in the same strain. “Too pure, too splendid work of human hands ‘a Poem in the marble.’ “The sigh of a broken heart.”

The main building of the masoleum is octagonal at the base—ment having four big sides of 139 feet and four small sides of 33 feet. The whole structure is of pure white marble. Its



Taj Agra

walls and arches are beautifully engraved with screens and mosaic work, and inlaid with inscriptions from Quaran in black marble. The heights of different parts of the masoleum are as below :—

From platform upto main arches ...	81 feet
From arches upto dome basement ...	89 feet
From dome basement upto its top ...	20 feet
Pinnacle's height ...	30 feet
Total height :—	220 feet

The masaleum rises to a height of 243 feet above garden level and 270 feet high from the level of the Jamuna river.

On the four corners of the masaleum are small domes above a pediment of saracenic arches. Each of the four sides has a central archway, 65½ feet high and four flower vases above them.

At each corner of the platform stands a circular minaret 140 feet high, which appear to be keeping guard over the masaleum. Each minaret possesses three galleries and a flight of 164 steps in the interior leading to the top. The first and second storeys of the minarets are 39 feet and the third is 25 feet high. On the uppermost galleries are eight windows crowned with a dome. From the top, the charming view is indescribable.

The beautiful portico of the masaleum is inscribed with Arabic text in bold black letters. Further a vesti-

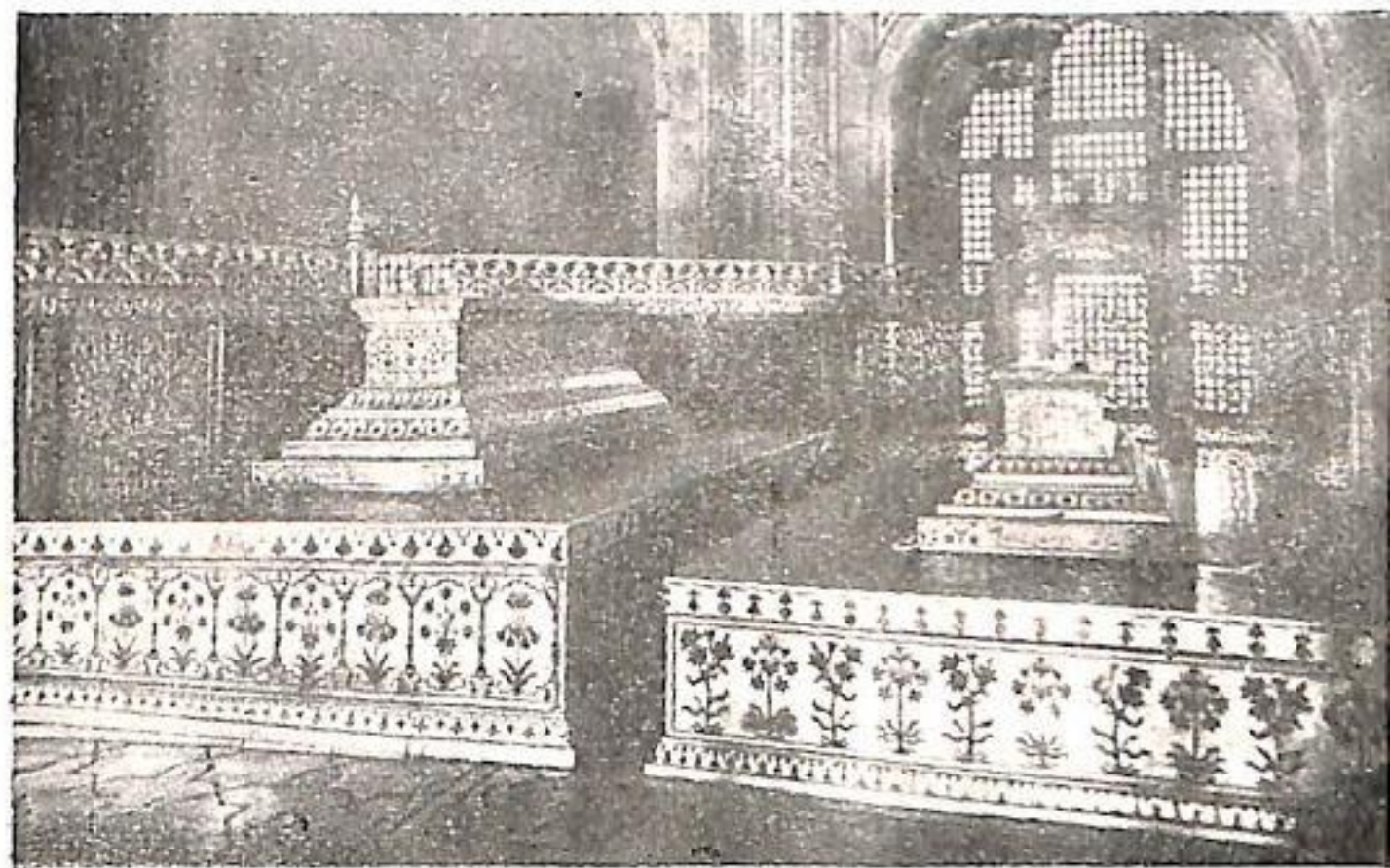
tute admits one to the interior. Reaching this place a wonderful scene is presented before one's eyes, for whom it becomes difficult where his eyes should rest, or what should claim attention first. The costly materials, the chaste design and the richness of ornament is such that the mind becomes uncertain which to admire most.

In "The Journal of a Tour in India" by Captain Mundy one reads—No description can convey an idea of the beauty and elegance of this monument. It is, I think the only object in India that I had heard previously eulogized, in which I was not disappointed on actual inspection. Nothing can exceed the beauty and truth to nature of the borders of leaves and flowers inlaid in white marble: the colours have all the delicacy of nature, and more of brilliancy than could be given by the finest painting. Cornelian, jasper, lapislazuli and a host of the agate tribe, present a fine variety of tints for the flowers, and the leaves are for the most part formed of bloodstone. So minute is the anatomy of the patterns, *that a rose, about the size of a shilling, contains in its mosaic no less than sixty pieces!*"

The whole structure is an irregular octagon. There are four eight-sided rooms and four square rooms and both sets of rooms are connected by galleries. The floors are nicely paved with octagonal pieces of marble. The walls, ceilings, screens, galleries and cenotaphs are of pure polished and shining marble beautifully engraved and inlaid with mosaic work. The entire interior is

exquisitely decorated with innumerable emeralds, jaspers, sapphires, onyxes, cornalians and other precious stones.

Cenotaphs—The cenotaph of the Empress Mumtaz Mahal occupies the centre below the principal dome. On a platform, $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet broad and $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet high lies the cenotaph slab $6\frac{1}{4}$ feet long, 3 feet wide and $2\frac{3}{4}$ feet high. On the cenotaph is written in black letter

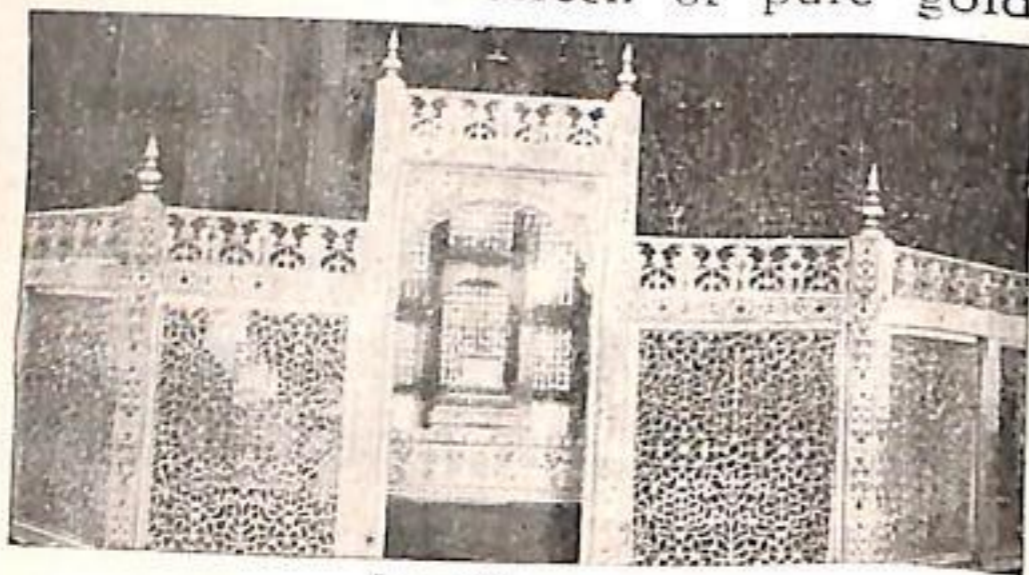


Tomb's-Taj Mahal, Agra

"The tomb of Arjumand Banu Begum called Mumtaz Mahal died in the year 1040 Hijri (1630 A. D.). The Hurs of the heaven came down to greet her and the Angels on her date of death did say 'In the heaven may always be Mumtaz's Seat.'

About 6 inches apart at western side is the cenotaph of Emperor Shah Jehan, built by his son Aurangzeb. Its platform is $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, $7\frac{1}{4}$ feet wide and 2 feet high. The cenotaph slab over the platform is 7 feet long, $3\frac{1}{4}$ feet broad and 3 feet high, a little higher than the Mumtaz's Cenotaph. The inscription on it is "The masaleum of the Most Exalted Majesty, having his abode in paradise, the second lord of constellation, may ever flourish. He passed away from the world on the night of the 28th of the month of Rajab 1076 A. H. (1666 A. D.)

Taj Screen—~~Round the cenotaphs~~ is a marble screen ~~or rather an enclosure~~, most elegantly executed. Emperor Shah Jehan erected here a screen of pure gold studded with gems at a cost of 6 lakhs of rupees. But for the fear of robbery it was replaced in 1642 A. D. by the present marble



Taj Screen

screen, which took 10 years to construct at a cost of 50,000. The eight-sided screen is $6\frac{1}{4}$ feet high, each side being $12\frac{1}{4}$ feet. To the south, the enclosure is open for the passage of the people. The enclosure is

finely ornamented and beautifully adorned and the floral ornamentation is of an excellent character.

Over the centre dome is a ring fixed since the days of Shah Jehan in which there was hanging a valuable chandelier. The royal chandelier was looted by the jats and thereafter in 1909 Lord Curzon, presented the beautiful bronze lantern to the Taj with great pomp and ceremony. It remains lighted day and night.

AGRA FORT

Agra Fort is one of the most important strongholds on the face of the globe. It is fortified by strong walls of red sandstone. The palatial buildings in it present the actual reflection of the Moghul's imperial pomp and grandeur. It was built by Akbar, the great Moghul Emperor, on the right bank of river Jamuna at the eastern side of Agra city.

Akbar, after founding Akbarabad and making this place the Capital of his empire, commenced to build this fort in 1565 A. D. On the same spot where once existed the old fort namely Badalgarh. It was completed in 1574 A. D. after $8\frac{3}{4}$ years at a cost of 35 lakhs of rupees. The work was entrusted to the chief architect Kasim Khan.

The fort is semi circular in shape having the circuit of about one and a half miles. It is surrounded by double walls, the outer wall is 40 feet high and the inner one is 70 feet. The inner wall consists of 16 strong bastions. The fort was enclosed within two paved ditches; the outer one 25 feet wide has disappeared

while the inner one which still exists is 35 feet deep and 30 feet wide. In Moghul days these ditches were filled with water during wars.

The fort was, no doubt, built by Emperor Akbar, but the present fort and its buildings are the result of combined efforts of Emperor Akbar, his son Jehangir and grand son Shah Jehan. No one can describe the grandeur of the fort of Moghul days. According to the account given by the famous historian Abbul Fazal it had 500 stone buildings out of which only a few exist now. Thereafter it has undergone many vicissitudes. In 1739 A. D. the fort was greatly damaged by the invasion of Nadir Shah. Afterwards serious havoc was wrought by Marhattas and Jats assaults during their reign. The mutiny of 1857 also had a great effect on it. Though this fort has greatly reduced in size and splendour it is worth a careful visit as it still contains many interesting sights.

Originally the fort had 4 gates, namely Delhi Gate, Amar Singh Gate, Water Gate and Darshani Darwaza. Of these four gates only Delhi Gate and Amar Singh Gate are in use and the others have been closed.

Delhi Gate—It is the main entrance to Agra fort and faces the famous Jama Masjid of the city. On both sides of the gate are two octagonal towers ornamented with white marble work of excellent pattern.

During Moghul days on its upper storey was the Naubat Khana (Music Hall). Here the Royal Band was

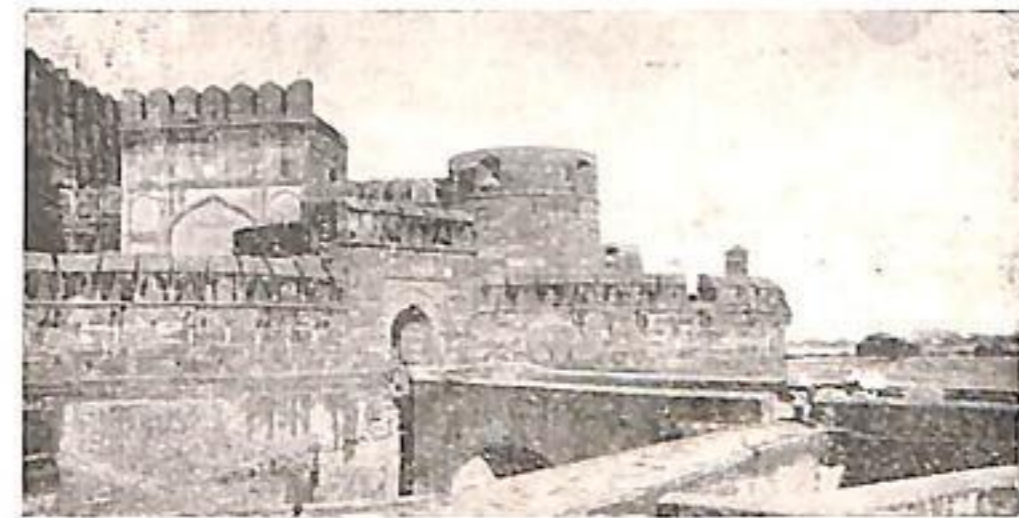


Naubat Khana

played at the arrival and departure of the Emperor and as well as at state functions. At that time on both sides of this gate were two big stone elephants with figures of two Rajput heroes Jaimal and Fatha. These were built by Akbar in 1568 A.D. to commemorate the bright memories of the Rajput heroes of Chittor who fought against him bravely in Chittor war and so the Emperor named the Gateway as Hathipole. Later on these elephants were destroyed by Aurangzeb in 1666 A.D. At present this gate is closed and only soldiers are allowed to go through it.

Amar Singh Gate—On the southern extremity of the Fort is the Gate opened for the general public. This

gate was built by Emperor Shah Jehan after the name of the great Rajput hero, Amar Singh Rathore, Maharaja of Jodhpur. It is said that in 1644 A.D.



Amar Singh Gate, Fort, Agra

in the full court of Emperor Shah Jehan, Salabat Khan, the imperial treasurer insulted him on which Amar Singh slew Slabat Khan. This turned the Moghul army against Amar Singh. Riding on his horse back, he jumped of the high walls of the fort near the spot where now is built Amar Singh Gate. His sincere horse was half in the ditch and half on the road and died at once. In memory of this marvellous incident a horse in red sand-stone was built.

Water Gate—In the centre of the wall facing the river was the Water Gate. In those days river Jamuna used to touch the walls of the fort and this gate served as an entrance to the bathing ghats on the Jamuna for the ladies of the harem. At that time the royal boats used to come and go near it.

Darshani Darwaza—It is just under the Jasmine

Tower. In Moghul days here the Emperor came daily at dawn to salute the rising sun and in turn received the salutation of his subjects. This custom was performed regularly without fail even if the emperor fell ill. From here the Emperor and his family watched the elephants and wild beast fights. It was closed by Aurangzeb when he kept his father, Shah Jehan, a captive inside the fort.

Jehangir's Mahal—Passing through the Amar Singh Gate attention is drawn to a double storeyed structure,

which is entirely built of red sand stone. This building is full of finest carving in stone. During royal days its walls and ceilings were highly



Jehangir's Mahal, Fort, Agra

adorned with brilliant colours and gold paintings. Various pavilions are exquisitely carved with birds, flowers and leaves just after the Rajput style of Jaipur side.

This edifice was built by Emperor Jehangir after demolishing one of the palaces built by his father, for his Hindu wife Jodhabai. Some historians are of the opinion that Emperor Akbar built it for his son's wife and they

give the proof of it as there is similarity in design of the building with that at Fatehpur Sikri.

The palace occupies an area of about 260 feet by 288 feet and has two towers on its both corners. The spacious courtyard in the centre is 76 feet square surrounded by two storeyed buildings. Queen Jodhabai used its eastern side as her library, western side as her temple, conversation hall in the north and drawing room in the south. The palaces were well ornamented with gilding and colour-decoration. The Hindu Temple was subsequently demolished by Emperor Aurangzeb. On the river side is an open courtyard adjoining this palace.

Jehangiri Houz—Outside the Jehangiri Mahal is a huge basin which is made out of a single block of porphyry and measures 25 feet in circumference and 5 feet high. Tradition relates that during Mahabhartha it was used for preparing Bhang for Raja Bhim, who was one

of the Pandavas. Steps are cut both in the inner and outer sides. It bears an inscription which records



"Emperor Jehangir got it repaired in 1611". Jehangir

was married to Nurjahan in 1611 and it was given to her as a gift. It is said that in it Nurjahan first made the discovery of essence, 'Atar of Roses'. After 1857 A. D. this basin buried in front of the Jehangir Mahal from where it was taken to Agra cantt garden. But after some time it was brought back to the fort and was placed in front of the Diwan-I-Am and thereafter was transferred to its present position.

Akbari Mahals—Palaces of Emperor Akbar stand to the south east of the Jehangir Mahal which are now in very delapidated condition. These were the houses for ladies of the royal harem and consisted of three sets of apartments. Each apartment was named after the particular day of the week on which Akbar visited it. Besides these the bastions on the south of the buildings were for foreign women and were known as Bengali Mahal.

Baoli—Just near the Akbari Mahals is a very big well otherwise called as Baoly. According to the records of Emperor Baber it was constructed by him, but some writers are of the opinion that it was built by Emperor Akbar. It is said to be 105 feet deep and 10 feet in diameter. It has many apartments round about it which were used as hot weather retreat by the Emperor and his family.

Shah Jehani Mahal—Shah Jehani Mahal also known as Rang Mahal, in fact is the northern part of Jehangiri Mahal which was subsequently remodeled by Emperor

Shah Jehan according to his own taste. The central room of the palace was the emperor's bed room. This palace is adorned with floral decorations all over the walls and roofs. A beautiful palace towards the riverside is styled as 'Hawa Mahal'. It was here that John Russel Colvin, Lt. Governor General of North-western Province whose tomb stands outside the Dewan-i-am died on September 9, 1857 A. D. Under the British rule this place was utilized as a museum uptil 1875, when it was tranferred to Allahabad.

Gazni Gates—The Gazni Gates are preserved in a room near the Shah Jehani Mahal and measure 12 feet high and 9 feet wide. These gates were brought by General Nott in 1892 after the first Afghan expedition in 1842. These gates belonged to Sultan Mahmud's tomb in Gazni. In the beginning these were thought to be gates of Somenath Temple, which were wrenched by Mahmud Gazni in 1625 A. D. But later on investigation revealed them to be deodar wood, and as the Somenath Gates were of sandal-wood, naturally these are not Somenath Gates. For many years these gates were kept in the Dewan-i-Am, but later on were removed in 1870 to their present position.

Khas Mahal—The structure built entirely of marble was erected by Emperor Shah Jehan on the site of earlier buildings built by Akbar, which were demolished to make room for it. In the Moghul days it was the most beautiful palace of the fort. It was the residence for

the ladies of the royal harem and was also known as Aram Gah.

The Khas Mahal consists of three pavilions. The central pavilion measures 70 feet by 40 feet. The pillars

and arches are elaborately carved. The entire hall is beautifully adorned with colourful paintings; but the golden plating on the



Khas Mahal

ceiling has disappeared. The tank, in it, contains five fountains and 32 jets which played day and night with rose water. It was the drawing and sleeping room for the Emperor Shah Jehan. This palace once contained portraits of Moghul Emperors from Baber downwards, which were scraped by Jat Raja of Bharatpur during his reign. From this palace the view of river Jamuna is a charming and attractive one.

The southern pavilion was the residence of Jehan Ara Begum, the favourite daughter of Emperor Shah Jehan and is entirely built of marble. The roof of this is brightly gilt. The pavilion that is on the north was the residence of Roshan Ara Begum, the second of Shah Jehan's daughter. The magnificence of these palaces

during imperial days is indescribable, when even now without any decoration these seem to be so beautiful.

Chhatri—On the westren side of the residence of Jehan Ara is the Chhatri or pavilion of Raja Jawahar Singh of Bharatpur who was assasinated in the fort in 1766. It consists of a miraculous carving at base relief.

Angoori Bagh—In front of the Khas Mahal is situated the Angoori Bagh or Vineyard and measures 220 feet north and south by 169 feet east and west. It was laid out by Emperor Akbar for his empress and the other ladies of the harem. It is related that the soil for it was brought from Kashmere. The Garden is surrounded on the three sides by double storeyed buildings which were built by Akbar and subsequently modified by Shah Jehan according to his wishes.

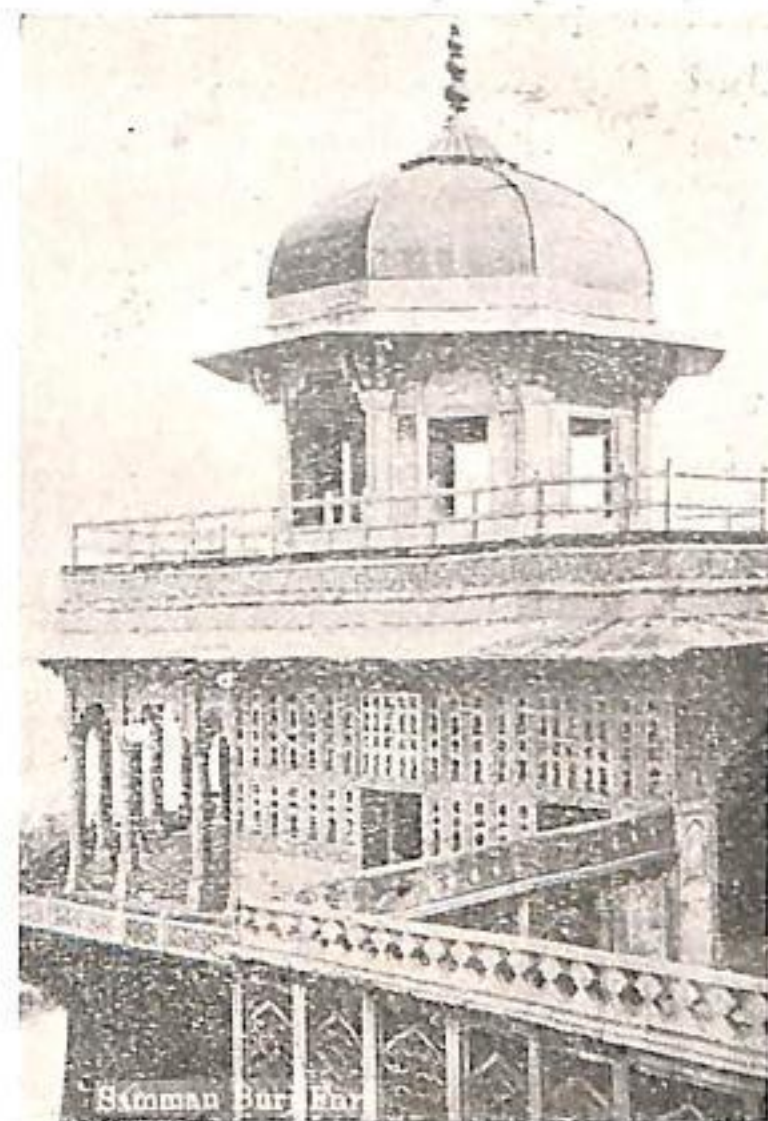
There is a beautiful tank in the centre 28 feet square and $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep. It was used by the ladies of the harem for bathing purposes. Four terraced walls reachable from the central platform and the spaces between them are intersected by paved ridges which form geometrical flower beds. In its glorious days the garden was excellent one and used to display its beautiful flower beds, grape vines, fruit trees and innumerable fountains.

Tai Khana—The underground apartments were used by the Royal members in hot weather to take rest. These chambers are built under the platform of the

Khas Mahal and most of these houses have been closed. Here was also a dark room where refractory members of harem were hanged and their bodies were swept away in the river. During those days these punishments were usual without any distinction of sexes. There was no law except the Emperor's orders and the punishments were drastic and furious.

Shish Mahal—It is situated in the north just near the Khas Mahal. As innumerable pieces of mirrors are inserted in the moorish stucco reliefs the palace is called as of mirrors. Originally the stucco reliefs were ornamented with golden paintings which has been disappeared. It was built by Emperor Shah Jehan in 1632 A.D. in the form of a Turkish bath for the use of his family members. It consists of two halls. One tank was meant for hot water and the other for cold water. Originally these chambers were paved with marble floors carved and inlaid with beautiful designs of fish. Here the emperor used to enjoy himself with his many wives while the tiny lamps reflected their beams all around, the fountains played with fragrant water and an unceasing water rolled on the floors. The palace was not less than a heaven where beauty and charms were scattered freely. Though the palaces now are not in the same state but the reflection of light on the mirrors is so striking that the effect produced is not easily forgotten. A passage from this palace leads to the old watery gate which has been closed later on.

Saman Burj—The octagonal tower was built by Emperor Jehangir for his beloved empress Nur Jehan as per her choice. Later on it was altered considerably by Shah Jehan. It is a miracle of marble filligral work inlaid with semi precious colourful stones, the excellence of which is very admirable. As the tower is adorned with a large number of jessmine so it is also called as Jessmine tower. Very fine artistic screens of marble surround the tower.



Saman Burj

After Empress Nur Jehan it was also occupied by Empress Mumtaz Mahal as her residence. It was the same place where Emperor Shah Jehan was kept as a captive by his son Aurangzeb and he breathed his last on the 22nd January 1666 gazing steadfastly on the tomb of his beloved consort, Mumtaz Mahal.

In fact from here a fine view of the world famous

masauleum, the Taj, built by Emperor Shah Jehan for his wife is very picturesque. From this place Taj Mahal appears like a shining piece of moon and it looks that the most beautiful palace of the heaven has come down on the earth.

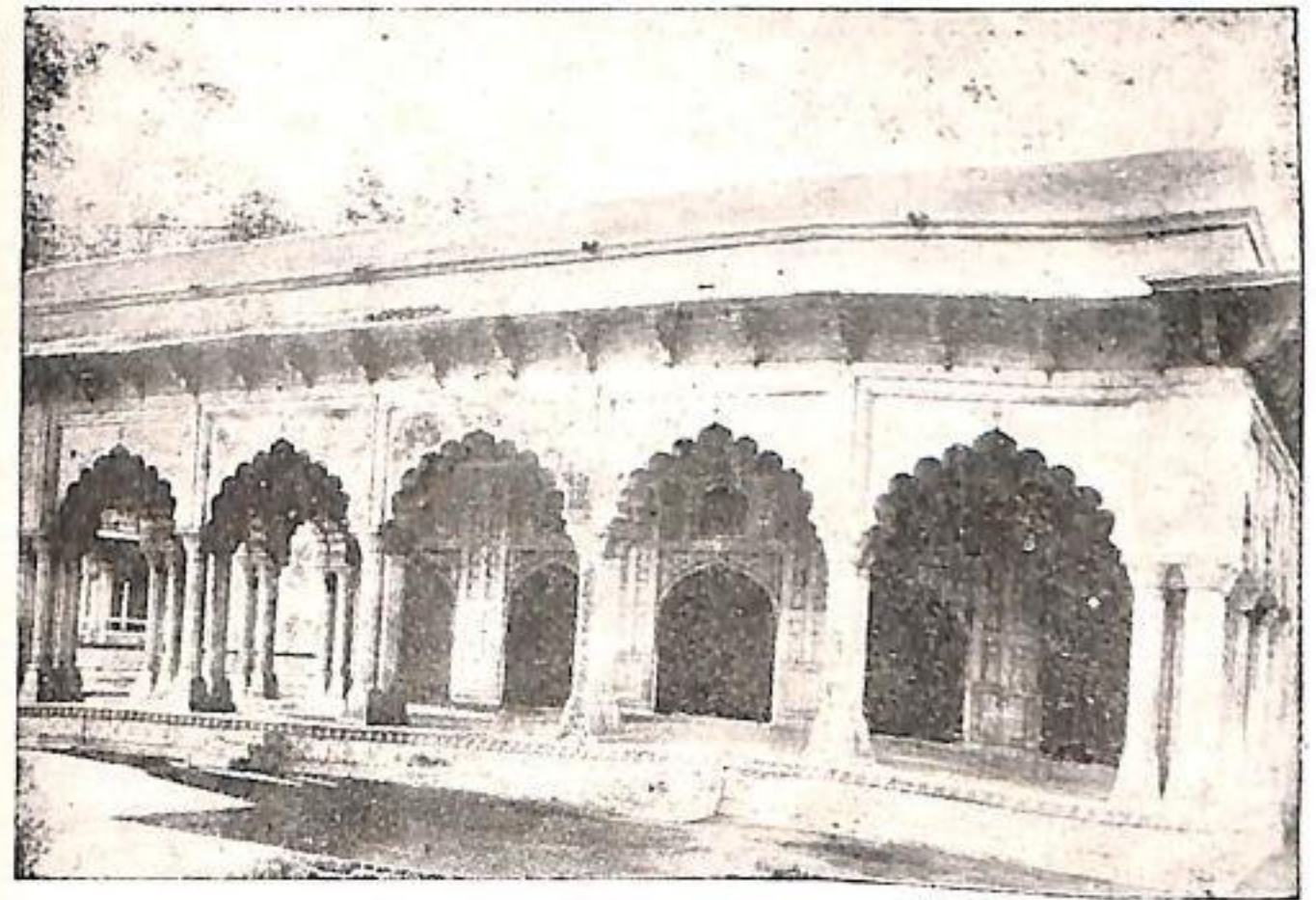
*Interior
view of the
Summan
Burj, Agra.*



In front of the Suman Burj is a shallow cistern, richly inlaid with coloured semi precious stones. Its courtyard measures 44 feet by 30 feet in which a pavement is made up into squares in coloured marble. Here the game of Pachchissi was played by the Emperor with other royal family members. The game was a lot of pleasure to the Royal players and probably the most favourite game of that time. The gaily dressed Harem girls served as pieces moving from square to square under the directions of the players.

Towards the western side of the Saman Burj was an exquisite marble Verandah, which was demolished by Lord Hastings and its fragments were sent to England. The white marble screen to the north of the building were damaged by cannon shots in 1803 but repaired afterwards.

Diwan-i-Khas--The hall of private audience is of pure white marble, built by Emperor Shah Jehan in



Diwan-i Khas, Fort Agra

1637 A. D. by the side of river Jamuna. It consists of two halls measuring one 37 feet by 33 feet and the other 40 feet by 26 feet. The pillars and the arches in the audience hall are inlaid with coloured flowers and semi precious stones. It is related that this building was constructed by the same artists who built the Taj Mahal. During its splendid days its roof was adorned with golden plating and the floors were paved with shining marble, which were pulled down by the Jats during their occupation of Agra.

It was here where daily in the morning and evening

Royal Durbars were held in which the Emperor had confidential discussions with his ministers and ambassadors etc. In this hall there are written some Persian Poems.

Black Throne—It is carved with its four legs from a single block of marble measuring 10 feet 7 inches by

9 feet 10 inches and 6 inches high. The throne stands on a platform of white marble. It bears some inscriptions relating that



Fort, Agra with Marble throne

it was constructed by Jehangir, the son of Akbar the Great. In 1602 A. D. Prince Salim (Jehangir) rebelled against his father, held his court at Allahabad and sat on this throne. Shortly afterwards when he came to Agra shed for pardon and was forgiven by Akbar. After the death of Emperor Akbar on his accession the throne was brought from Allahabad to Agra and was placed here. It is said that sitting on it the emperor used to say his morning prayer and watch the animal fights during the day-time.

White Throne—In front of the black throne is placed a white marble throne. During the reign of Jehangir it was the seat of the Prime Minister, but Emperor Shah

Jehan used it for amusing himself by fish hunting in the Machchi Bhawan, built below.

Hammam—In front of the Diwan-i-Khas are the Royal Baths, the walls of which were fitted with pipes for heating and cooling the water at will. In the days of Moghuls each room of the building had a tank in which fountains played with fragrant water. These bath rooms were built by Emperor Akbar and later on improved upon by Emperor Shah Jehan.

Machchi Bhawan—This red sand stone structure is situated between the Diwan-i-Khas and Diwan-i-Am. It consists of a courtyard 164 feet by 132 feet, in which there were many marble tanks and beautiful fountains. In the splendid days of Shah Jehan the tanks were full of golden and silvery fish, which afforded sportive amusements to the Emperor. It is also related that the Royal Treasury was also roomed in the underground of the courtyard.

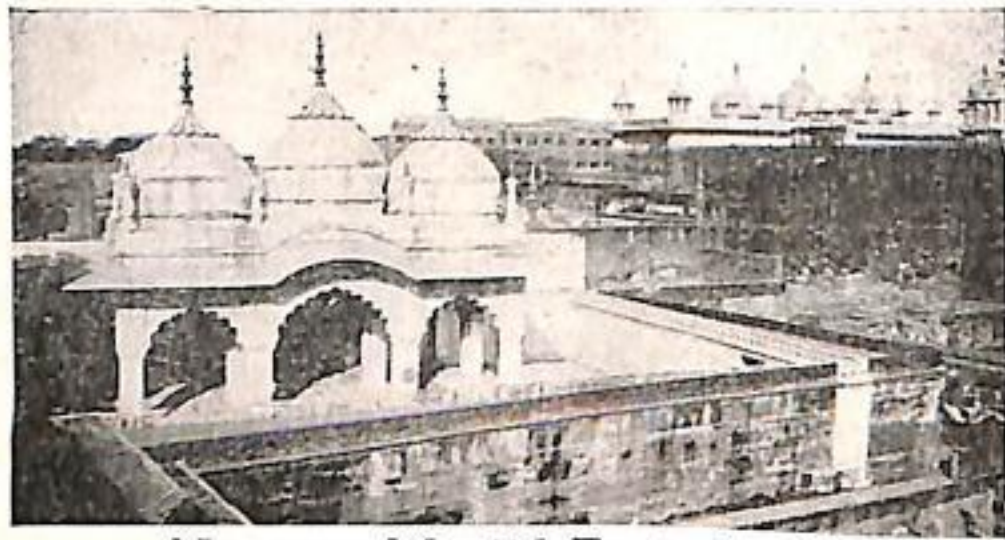
The courtyard is surrounded on three sides by double storeyed buildings which were demolished and the beautiful fragments were sent to England by Lord Hastings and William Bentinck. The marble tanks were dug out and carried off by Suraj Mal Jat to Bharatpur during his reign. With these tanks he adorned his palace garden at Deeg, where they may still be seen.

Meena Masjid—In the south of Machchi Bhawan is a mosque of white marble built by Emperor

Aurangzeb for the use of his father when the latter was a captive in the fort. Internally the mosque measures 22 feet by 13 feet having a 22 feet square courtyard in front of it.

Nageena Masjid—Built entirely of pure white marble, this mosque is situated in the north west corner

of the Machchi Bhawan. It was built by Aurangzeb in 1658 A. D. at the site of an earlier building for the ladies of the



Nageena Masjid Fort, Agra

harem, who said their prayers here. Though it is a small mosque in size but seems to be very beautiful like a gem. In the southern wall of the mosque one door leads into the Meena Bazar.

Meena Bazar—The building is an unassuming structure of red sand stone with open chambers on the sides for merchants. It was built by Emperor Akbar for the use of the ladies of the harem as a small market. The wives and daughters of the chiefs and nobles used to sell and purchase the costly materials and none of the male sex except the emperor was allowed to enter into this fancy bazaar. The market was held once a

month and on New year day (Nav Roz) valuable manufactures of whole world were sold here.

The ladies were quite free and used to roam, fro, laugh, play and talk frankly. The scene at that time was like a fairy land because there was nothing but innumerable blooming ladies of rich men in magnificent garments. In order to please the emperor, the chiefs and nobles sent their ladies to take part in it. It is known that Emperor Akbar used to attend the festival in feminine disguise so that he could be able to move freely and mix up with feminine sex.

This kind of festival has left a blot on the personality of Akbar the Great. Though such kind of festivals introduced by Akbar in order to give some freedom to women when very strict *purdah* was observed and females were merely prisoners within the boundry of their homes but in the later period the quaint old custom had degenerated and brought about an evil reputation. He, in fact, was a lustrous and passionate man. By the help of this bazaar he was able to find out most beautiful and charming ladies and when and whom he liked he tried to get her by some way or the other. This is why some wise Rajput Chiefs did never send their ladies there.

Chittor Gates—Towards the south east of the Meena Bazar are the beautiful Chittor Gates built in bronze. These were brought by Akbar in 1568 A. D.

from Chittor, the celebrated stronghold of the Rajputs.

Hindu Mandir—To the east of Chittor Gates is a structure built by Raja Ratan, General of Maharaja Prithvi Indra during the Jat supremacy (1761-74 A. D.) and is known as the temple of Raja Ratan.

Diwan-i-Am—Towards the west of the Machchi Bhawan seems the great hall of public audience, built of

red-sand stone. The hall stands on a plinth of 3 feet high and measures 192 feet by 64 feet. The courtyard in front of it



Diwan-i-Am Fort, Agra

is 500 feet by 70 feet. The building was built by Emperor Akbar and afterwards its pillars, arches and ceilings etc. were coated with white stucco work. The walls of this building are beautifully inlaid with mosaic flowers and in semi precious stones.

In the times of the Moghuls, daily in the morning, at the presence of the Emperor the Royal Darbar was held, the splendour and glory of which is indescribable. The building was kept well decorated and scented with many fine smells.

Qursi—A few feet above the ground towards the

back of the hall is the Imperial balcony of white marble. Its walls are beautifully inlaid with mosaic flowers in semiprecious stones. The royal throne of gold embedded with jewels and precious stones was placed in this Jharokha on which the Emperor used to sit with great pomp and show. The balcony is protected by a marble railing and three arches of marble.

Below the balcony is a marble dias standing on which the Prime Minister presented the applications to the emperor and told the foreign news. In front of the dias the space was reserved for Rajas, Omraos and ambassadors. The outer part was meant for the minor officials and the general public. After hearing the applications the Emperor did justice before the applicant and the defaulter. It was the custom for the decorated elephants and horses to be paraded before the Emperor when the proceedings grew monotonous. Perfect peace and calmness was observed and a breach of court etiquette resulted in severe punishment. After ending the Royal Darbar the Emperor used to depart to the mosque for prayer.

On both sides of the Qursi are two rooms having perforated marble windows for the ladies of the harem to watch the proceedings of the court.

Salim Garh—To the west of Diwan-i-Am is a two storeyed building. It was built by Emperor Jehangir, who used it as a Music hall for his pleasure. The structure is well known for its exquisite carvings.

Pearl Mosque—The splendid lofty building of white marble visible from a distance is situated to the



Pearl Mosque, Fort, Agra

north of Diwan-i-Am. It is known as the most beautiful mosque in India. It was constructed by Emperor Shah Jehan at a cost of three lakhs of rupees, commenced in 1647 and completed after seven years in 1654 A. D.

It measures 243 feet by 187 feet externally. There are three gates to the mosque, but the main one is only in use and the other two, which were meant for the ladies of the harem are closed. It is reached by some steps. The gate like its adjusting walls is built of red sand-stone.

The courtyard of the mosque is marble paved and measures 158 feet by 154 feet. It contains a beautiful

marble tank measuring 36 feet square. In the south east corner is a sundial which is placed on a marble pillar 4 feet high and



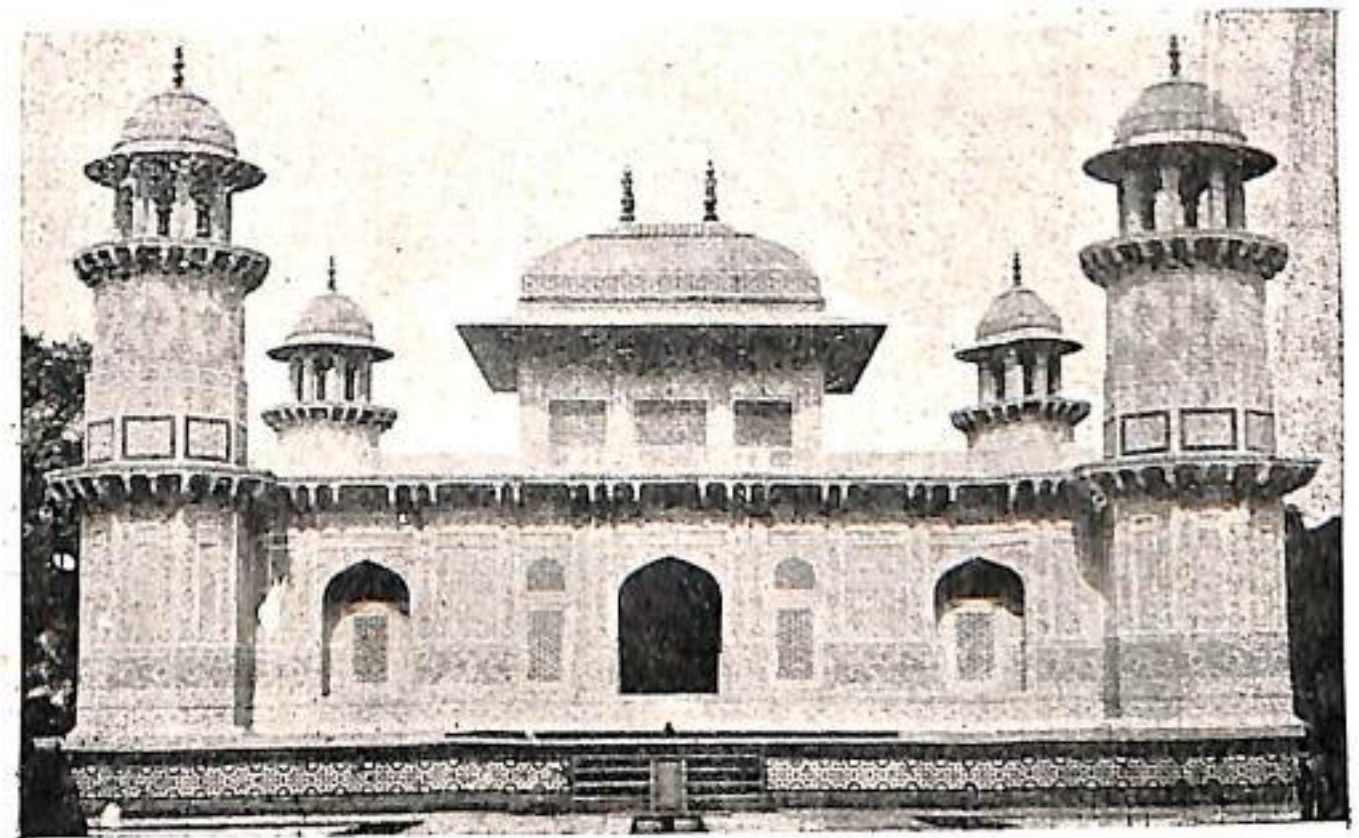
was used to know the correct time for saying prayers.

Interior of the Pearl Mosque, Fort, Agra

The interior enclosure of the mosque measures 146 feet by 56 feet and is divided into three parts by rows of pillars. It has the seating capacity for 570 worshippers. The two small chambers on either side have seating capacity for 90 members. The chambers are screened off by marble work and were used for the ladies of the harem. The white marble floor is delicately inlaid with pale yellow marble. There are three big white domes above the mosque 142 feet long and 56 feet deep.

It is known that a precious and wonderfully big sized pearl used to hang from the ceiling by a golden chain and hence the mosque was named as Pearl Mosque.

ITMAD-UD-DAULA'S TOMB



The exquisite masaleum of Empress Nurjehan's father is situated at a distance of a mile from the Agra City. The beautiful monument was built by Nurjehan herself for her father Mirza Ghias Beg otherwise known as Itmad-ud-Daula, who was the Prime Minister in Emperor Jehangir's court, after his death.

Mirza Ghias Beg belonged to a high family of Tehran but after expiry of his father he became poor. Having heard about Akbar he proceeded to India to seek his fortunes in the court of the Great Mughal. His condition was so pitiable that on his way to India, he had nothing with him even to feed his family. His misfortunes were further increased when his wife gave birth to a female child. In such conditions he made up his mind to leave the new born child in the desert and according to his advice his wife did so with a heavy heart. Fortunately a merchant known as Mulkamsud also passed by that way and saw that a very beautiful child was protected by a serpent holding its hood upon her face. The merchant thinking the child as of great fate at once took her in his arms and went on. On his way further he came across Mirza's family, handed over the child to her mother and also supported them. Reaching India, Mirza Ghias Beg accompanied the merchant to the Court of Akbar at Fatehpur Sikri. Emperor Akbar found him a learned man and appointed him in the Court. Owing to his genial qualifications he rose to very bright position and got the title of Mansuf Hazari.

The daughter of Mirza Ghias Beg, Mehrunnisa used to come to the Imperial Harem with her mother. When

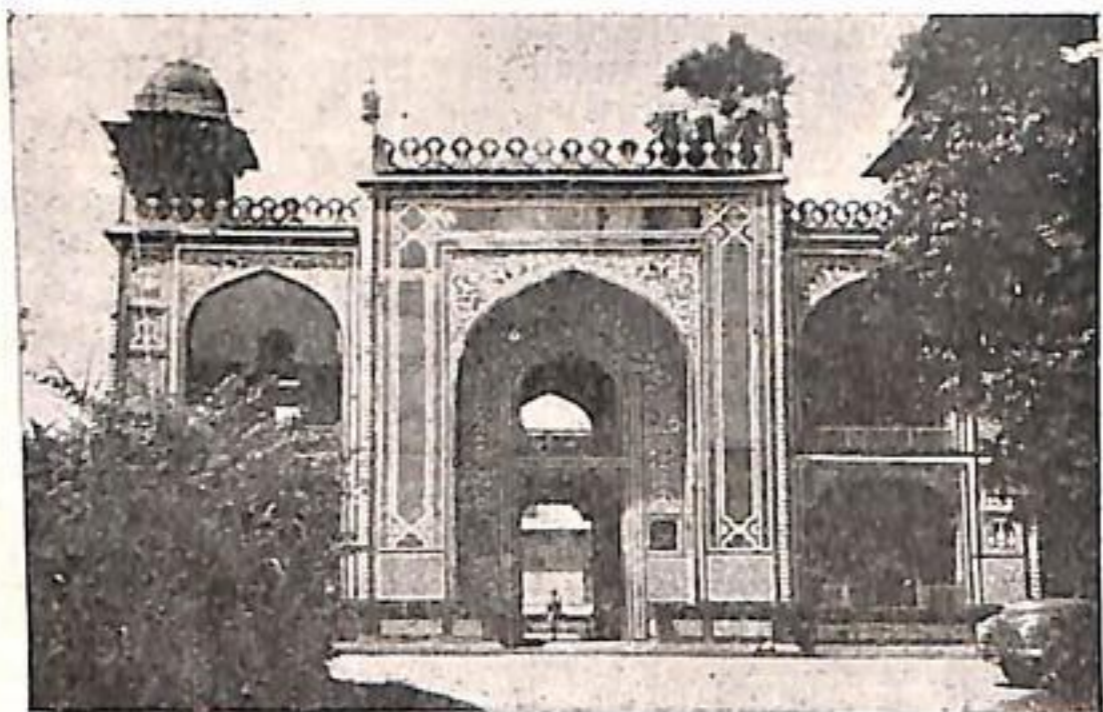


Nur Jehan

she grew young her charms increased and Prince Salim fell in love with her. When this matter came to Emperor Akbar's notice he did not appreciate it and got her married to Sher Afghan, the Governor of Bardwan, gave her the title of Nur Mahal and sent them to Bengal. In the long run this Nur Mahal became the beloved consort of Emperor Jehangir and the Empress of India. As a queen Nur Jehan gave high ranks to her father and brother

in the royal court. Her Niece Arjumand Banoe (Mumtaz Mahal) was married to Prince Khurram. Her daughter by her first husband was married to the Emperor's youngest son Prince Shaharyar.

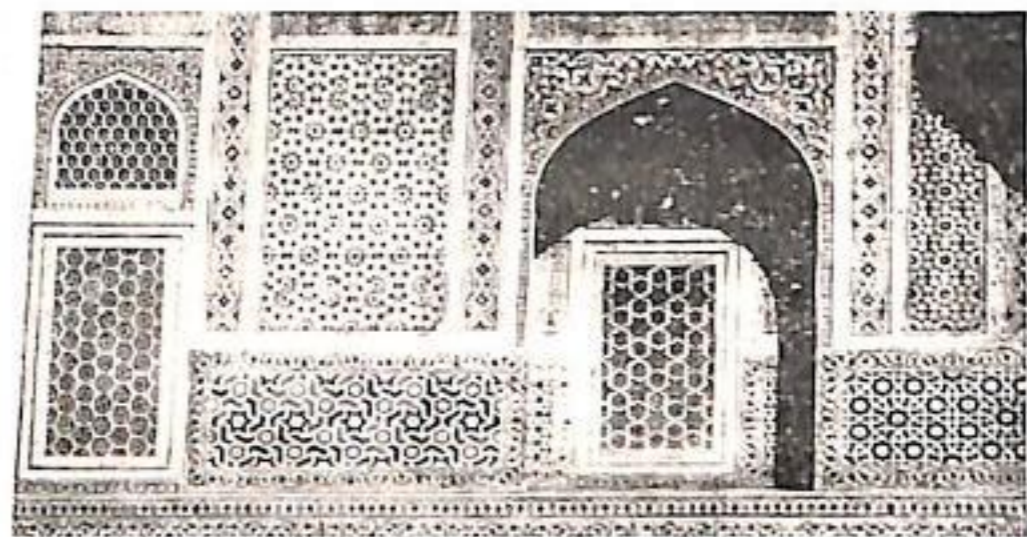
Empress Nur Jehan's mother Asmat-il-Nisa died in 1620 A. D. Itmad-ud-Daula was so much grieved by his wife's death that after three months only he also died at Kangra. Nur Jehan wanted that her father's masaleum should be built of silver, but the artists and the builders advised her that such sort of building would be undurable while the marble work would be everlasting and safe from the plunderers. The Emperor agreed to it started to build the edifice in 1622 A. D. After nine years the building completed in 1631 A. D.



This kind of monument was the first example in India of inlaid work in a style derived from Persian mosaics. The building marks the transition from the style of architecture from the days of Akbar to that of *Shah Jehan*. The rectangular shaped monument built of white marble is enclosed with a beautiful and spacious garden.

The garden is fenced by high walls on three sides and the fourth opens to the river. Its main entrance is most imposing and a double storeyed structure of red sand stone artistically set in marble mosaic. Towards the river Jamuna, there is a beautiful Baradari, whence the view of the river as well as of Agra is very charming. During the days of Mughals in summer the lower rooms of the Baradari were provided with Khus Khus Curtains and afforded a cool retreat from the scorching winds of summer. The upper Chambers were used as bath rooms by the royal ladies.

The tomb proper stands on a raised platform of red sand stone 150 feet square. The structure is entirely of pure white marble marvelously decorated with inlaid work and screen. The extensive inlay work in this building competes



Marble Screen Etmaduddaula Tomb Agra with the work done in the Taj. On four corners stand double storeyed octagonal towers and in the centre is the light sided beautiful dome. In the central hall the marble floor is richly decorated with mosaic. The marble walls are decorated with inscriptions from the Quran. In the screens are the patterns of flowers, foliage and cups handsomely represented. In the centre

of the hall lie the cenotaphs of Itma d-ud-Daula and his wife Asmat-It-Insā of highly polished yellow variety of marble. The ceilings of this edifice were decorated with



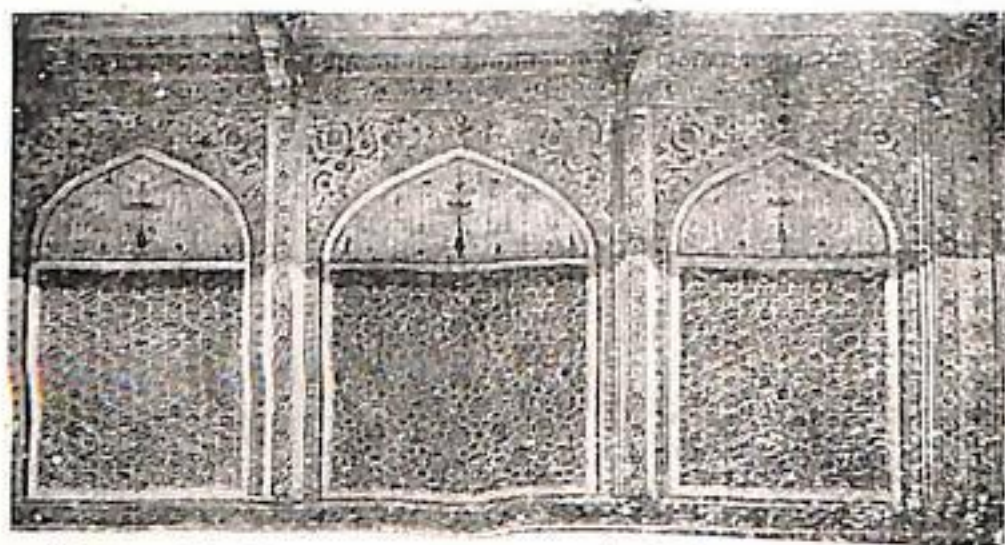
Tomb Screen Etmaduddaula, Agra

The ceilings of this edifice were decorated with

gold and silver paintings, which were scrapped off by the jats during their short occupation of Agra, but partially restored by Lord Curzon in 1905 before the visit of Prince of Wales. In the surrounding Chambers are the graves of other members of Itmad-ud Daula's family.

A stair case leads to the second storey. The roof of the chamber rests on 12 marble pillars with marble

screens of exquisite pattern. Similar to those in the hall below are here also two cenotaphs of plain marble.



Marble Screen of Etmaduddaula, Agra

CHINI-KA-ROZA

At a distance of two furlongs lies Chini-ka-Roza so called from the mosaic work in tiles of different colours made in Persian style. The rectangular structure, surmounted by a great bulbous dome stands in a small garden. The Central Chamber contains two cenotaphs. This tomb was built by Shukrullah, the famous poet of Shiraz. Shukrullah entered the services of Jehangir in 1618 A. D. and became the Financial Minister to Shah Jehan. He died in Lahore in 1639 and his remains

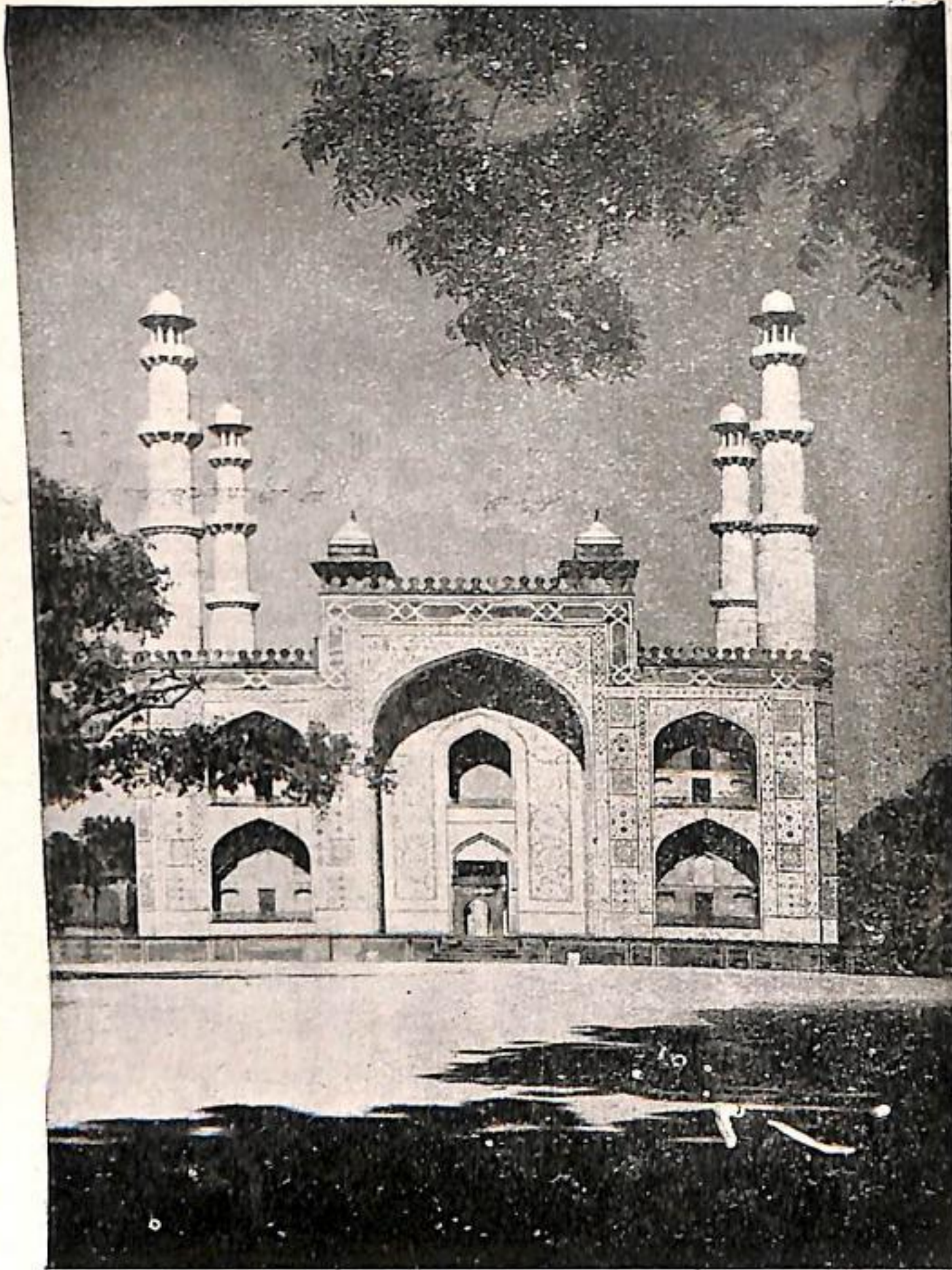
were brought from there and interned here. The second grave is of Shukrullah's wife. The top of the Chamber is inscribed with the texts of the Quran. Though this tomb is in a very ruined condition but still it is worth seeing as the constructive work is very fine.

RAM BAGH

This garden lies on the left bank of the river Jamuna about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Agra. Baber the founder of the Moghul Dynasty felt terrible heat in India as he was an inhabitant of a cold country. When he thought that Moghul Empire had been founded well then he laid out this garden. It was used by him as a garden of repose and a place of recreation and thereby he named it as Aram Bagh. After the death of Baber, his dead body was temporarily kept in this garden and thereafter it was removed to Kabul for burial. At the spot where the dead body was kept a building known as Chauburji was built. Empress Nur Jehan named it as Bag-e-Nur-Afshan (Light spangled garden) and it was her favourite resort. The name was subsequently changed to Ram Bagh by Marhathas during their occupation of Agra.

SIKANDRA

About five miles far from Agra City on the Muttra road lies the village of Sikandra. In 1492 A. D. Sikander Lodi of Lodi dynasty, after occupying Agra used this place as the capital of his Empire. He called it as Sikandra. Though this place has lost the glory



of its past but some furlong from the Emperor Akbar's Tomb the place is still inhabited in the shape of a village.

After 99 years of the Sikander Lodi's Empire in 1602 A. D. Emperor Akbar fixed this place for his mausoleum and started to build it. But after 3 years only when the tomb was yet in the course of construction Akbar died.

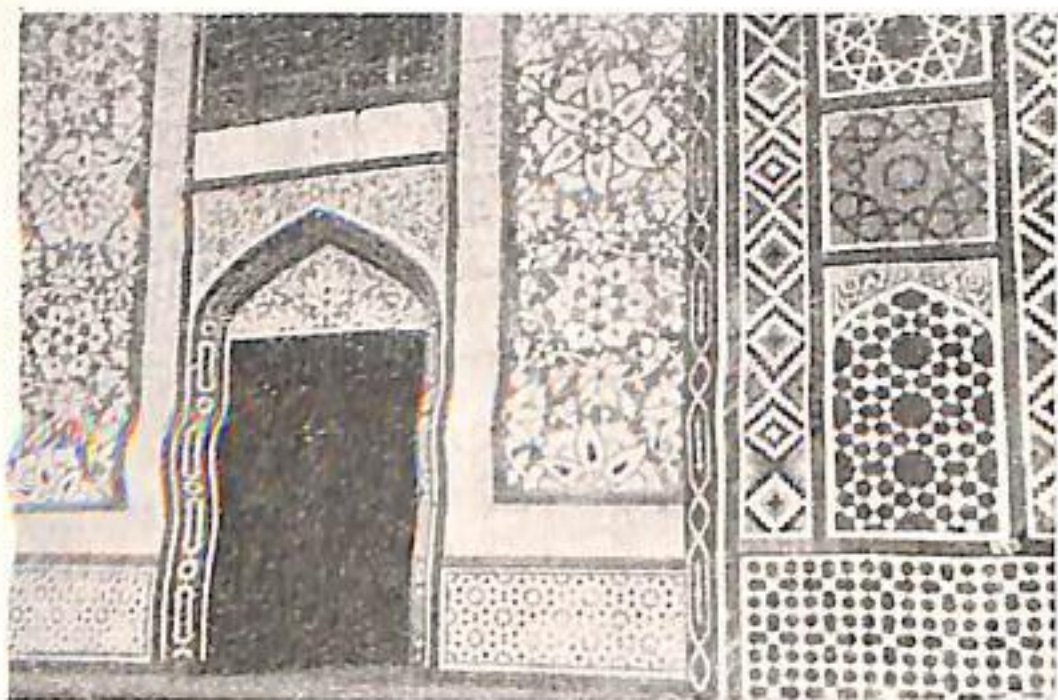
Akbar's Tomb—Emperor Akbar's masaleum stands in the garden known as Bahishtabad extending an area of 150 acres. It is enclosed by stone walls 25 feet high pierced by 4 gates on all sides.

Main Gate—The main entrance lies to the south and is a building by itself. This splendid gate of red sand stone is 74 feet high having 4 minarets of white marble 86 feet high from the roof on its four corners. Each minaret is reached to its summit by 93 stairs within. These minarets were broken, but they were sufficiently repaired by Lord Curzon in 1905 A. D. It is said that formerly in the days of Moghuls the doors of this gate were of sandal wood which were either carried off by Jats or were destroyed during the mutiny of 1857.

Formerly the roof of this gate was of silver and decorated with gold, which was also scratched by the Jats later on. The above portion of the gate is called as Naubat Khana where the Kettle drums were beaten in honour of the dead Emperor Akbar at dawn and

again one hour after sun rise, Its roof has four cupolas built of marble and red sand stone mixed and surrounded by beautiful Kangura work. The exterior and interior portion of the building is profusely decorated with marble inlay work. The outer and inner sides of the gate are precisely the same. On either sides of the gateway are built courtyards of red sand stone known as Nau Mehlas.

From the gate upto the masaleum are broad stone causeways. In the centre of these causeways are narrow



canals with small tanks. By the sides of these are grassy plots having innumerable trees.

Masaleum—The masaleum proper stands on a marble platform 46 feet square and 30 feet high from the level of the earth. Great architects are of the opinion that the design of this edifice was evolved from



Budhist Vihar liked by Emperor Akbar. The masaleum is a five storeyed building each upper storey being smaller in dimension than the previous one. The base of the masaleum is 339 feet square. All the storeys are surrounded by arcaded cloisters in white. Three Storeys in the middle are of red sand stone as the lower one, but the upper most storey is entirely of white marble. By the difference it is clear that the first four storeys were built by Emperor Akbar and the uppermost was built by his son Jehangir.

It is said after 3 years of the death of Akbar when Jehangir went to pay homage to his father on foot he

was not satisfied with the construction of his father's tomb. He extended the arc and completed it at a cost of 15 lakhs in 1613 A. D.



View of Akbar's Tomb, Agra

In the first storey a sloping passage leads to the mortuary chamber. Here sleeps beneath the tomb stone Akbar the Great. The grave is simple and was made according to the desire of Emperor Akbar. In the splendid days rich rugs were spread over the floor, a canopy of gold and silver brocade used to cover the cenotaph and by its side the books, the clothings and the armour of the Emperor laid beside his grave. The entire chamber was highly painted over in gold. The jats carried off all the valuables and scrapped off the paintings in gold but Lord Curzon restored some portion of it after *spending a lot in 1905 A.D.* on the arrival of *Prince of Wales*. At present two embroidered velvet *sheets* cover the grave. These sheets were presented by H. H. the Maharaja of Bardwan at a cost of 300 rupees. A beautiful bronze lantern hangs in the roof above and is kept lighted day and night.

On both sides of the masaleum are flight of

which lead upto the upper storeys. The rooms adjoining these contain many graves of the members of the royal family. A flight of 39 steps leads to the first storey. Minarets of red sand stone and marble are erected on its four sides. Other flights of 15 steps and 14 steps lead to the second and third storeys respectively. These storeys also have many minarets alike the first storey. From these storeys the view of river Jamuna is very fine. Fatehpur Sikri and the Taj are also visible from here.

The upper most storey entirely built of marble is the most interesting part of the building. It is quite open to the sky. The floor of it is paved with marble pieces in colour and surrounded by a cloister having fretted marble screens. 9 small rooms on each side surround the yard and on the arches of the rooms are carved Persian rhymes.

In the centre is a raised platform with panelled sides on which stands the cenotaph, cut out of a single block

of white marble 400 maunds in weight, representing the real grave beneath in the mortuary chamber. At the head of the cen-



Akbar's Tomb, Sikandra, Top View, Agra

taph is a marble pedestal in the hollowed recess in which the great diamond Koh-i-noor used to be laid. Both the cenotaph and pedestal are artistically carved. An inscription on the northern side is "Alla-ho-Akbar" (God is great), on the south is "Jille-Jalalhu" (Magnificent is His glory) and round about are carved ninety-nine names of the Almighty.

Jehangiri Shish Mahal—Near the main gate of Akbar's Tomb on the south east side is Sheesh Mahal, the palace of mirror. The palace was constructed by Emperor Jehangir for his beloved Nur Jehan. No one can describe its glory in the days of the great Moghuls when they were living in it. Now it is in a delapidated condition and only the inlay work in one highly carved gate is worth seeing.

Maraim Zamani's Tomb—Three furlongs towards the west from Akbar's Tomb on Muttra Road is situated



the tomb built by Emperor Jehangir for his mother Maraim Zamani. It was the Royal Palace of Sikander Lodi. The grave of the dear wife of Emperor Akbar is built of white marble in the middle vault. The tomb is in a delapidated condition and the neighbouring buildings are in ruin. In the vicinity of this tomb is only a Mission School and a church.

JAMA MASJID

The Jama Masjid; a fine structure stands in front of the Agra Fort station. The mosque was built by Emperor Shah Jehan according to the choice of his favourite daughter Jehan-Ara-Begum in 1644 and completed in 1649 A. D. at a cost of 5 lakhs of rupees.

The mosque has three gate ways but the main gate is towards the north. Jama Masjid is 380 feet by 270 feet and stands on a platform 11 feet high. The whole building consists of three compartments, each surmounted by a dome. The walls are built of white and red sand stone in zig-zag way. There are octagonal domed cupolas on its each corner and small cupolas on its four sides.



Jama Masjid, Fort Agra

In the centre of this Mosque's yard is a tank intended for the ablutions of the worshippers. There is also a small under-ground chamber in which there is the grave of a dervesh.

There are five archways in the front, one large in the middle is 40 feet high and two small on each side. In the chambers are the places marked for the worshippers. The rooms on both sides in curtains are meant for the royal ladies.

RADHA SWAMI'S SMADHI

About a distance of 4 miles from Agra City is the Smadhi of Radha Swami, who was living between 1818 and 1878. He gave out a new sect in 1862 and designated himself as Sant Sadguru. This smadhi is being constructed of marble and other semi precious stones.

A miniature model of the smadhi is kept in a room in its garden which can be seen by the visitors at receiving the permission of the Secretary. According to this model the plinth of this building is 20 feet high from the ground and the platform is 50 feet. Above this will be a two storeyed building with four minarets at each corner and a big dome in the centre. The estimated cost of it is 50 lakhs of rupees.

The edifice is under construction since 1915 A. D. and the chief architect is Lala Tota Ramji. Here

persons are working daily. From the artistically carving and floral designs it appears the building at its completion will be a grand one and it is possible that it would compare with the Taj.

Near the Smadhi is the colony known as Dayal Bagh which was established by the people of the Radha Swami Sect. The foundation of this colony was laid by the 5th leader of the sect His Holiness Sir Anand Swarup Sahibjee Maharaj in 1915 A. D. The colony, has its own bank, post office, Hospital and educational institutions. Its industrial area is worth a visit. The colony is famous for its textiles leather and dairy works and the people all over the country prefer to use its products,

FATEHPUR SIKRI

Fatehpur Sikri, the city of Victory, an enduring monument to the great Moghul Emperor Akbar lies 23 miles from Agra in a great plain unrelieved by a small hill. Upto the end of 14th century it was occupied by the Rajput chiefs. At the same spot a decisive battle was fought between Baber and the famous Rajput warrior, Rana Sanga.

Formerly, it was a small village called Sikri and was the home of stone-cutters. Sheikh Salim Chisti, the celebrated Mohammedan saint dwelt here in a cave. He was very much famous for his spiritual deeds. Once while returning from a campaign Akbar halted at Sikri, he was then anxious for a heir to the throne. On meeting the saint he fell at his feet and the Emperor's desire was fulfilled. According to the suggestion of the saint he sent his Hindu wife Mariom-Uz-Zamani to reside at Sikri. Within a year a male child was born to the Emperor. Akbar's joy knew no bounds and he named his son Salim after the holy saint. Considering the place to be fortunate to himself he made it his capital and called it as Fatehpur, the town of victory, after the conquest of Gujrat.

In 1569 A. D. Akbar founded his city and then

began to rise great battlemented walls, the magnificent palaces and courtyards, the great mosque and other superb specimens in red-sand stones which stand to this day a source of wonder and admiration to visitors. After Akbar's death, Fatehpur Sikri was soon deserted, within 50 years of its foundation, mainly due to lack of water.

The deserted capital is six miles in circumference, three sides being enclosed by high battled walls pierced with seven massive gateways. The fourth side is open and is being protected by an artificial lake.

Where once the great Moghul held his court with a great pomp and show there now slink at night howling jackals. But, today he is a memory and only a few great buildings remain to remind one of the greatness that was his.

The deserted capital is enclosed by 50 feet high battle walls built of stones on three sides. The walls were pierced with seven massive gateways namely Delhi Gate, Agra Gate, Ajmere Gate, Muttra Gate, Chanderphul Gate and Birbal Gate. On the fourth side was an artificial lake for protection. The edifices at Fatehpur Sikri are mostly built of red sand stones in Hindu style and appear very beautiful in the bright sun of winter season.

Generally the visitors enter by Agra Gate which stands towards the east. Two roads meet inside this

gate. One leads through the modern town where there are innumerable residential houses and workshops for manufacturing daries, choories and stone work. The other road runs to the royal palaces indicating the faded glory of the past.

Naubat Khana—A few yards beyond the Agra Gate the first building which appears, is the Naubat Khana (Music Gallery). The building is square having four gates. The arches of the northern and southern gates



Naubat
Khana

are built in Mohammedan style and of the rest are in Hindu style. In the days of Akbar it was guarded by troops and music would be played as the emperor entered the capital.

Mint and Treasury—Towards the east of Naubat Khana is a building where gold and silver coins were minted in 1577 A.D. On the opposite side of the road is a ruined building where there was the royal treasury.

Dewan-i-Am—The hall of public audience of red sand stone measuring 365 feet by 181 feet was built by Emperor Akbar in 1570-86 A. D. In the centre is an elevated recess forming the Emperor's Judgement Seat.



Dewan-i-Am

The roof above the seat provided promenade for the ladies of the royal seraglio. On the 3 sides of the hall

are cloisters capable of seating thousands of litigants, suitors and others.

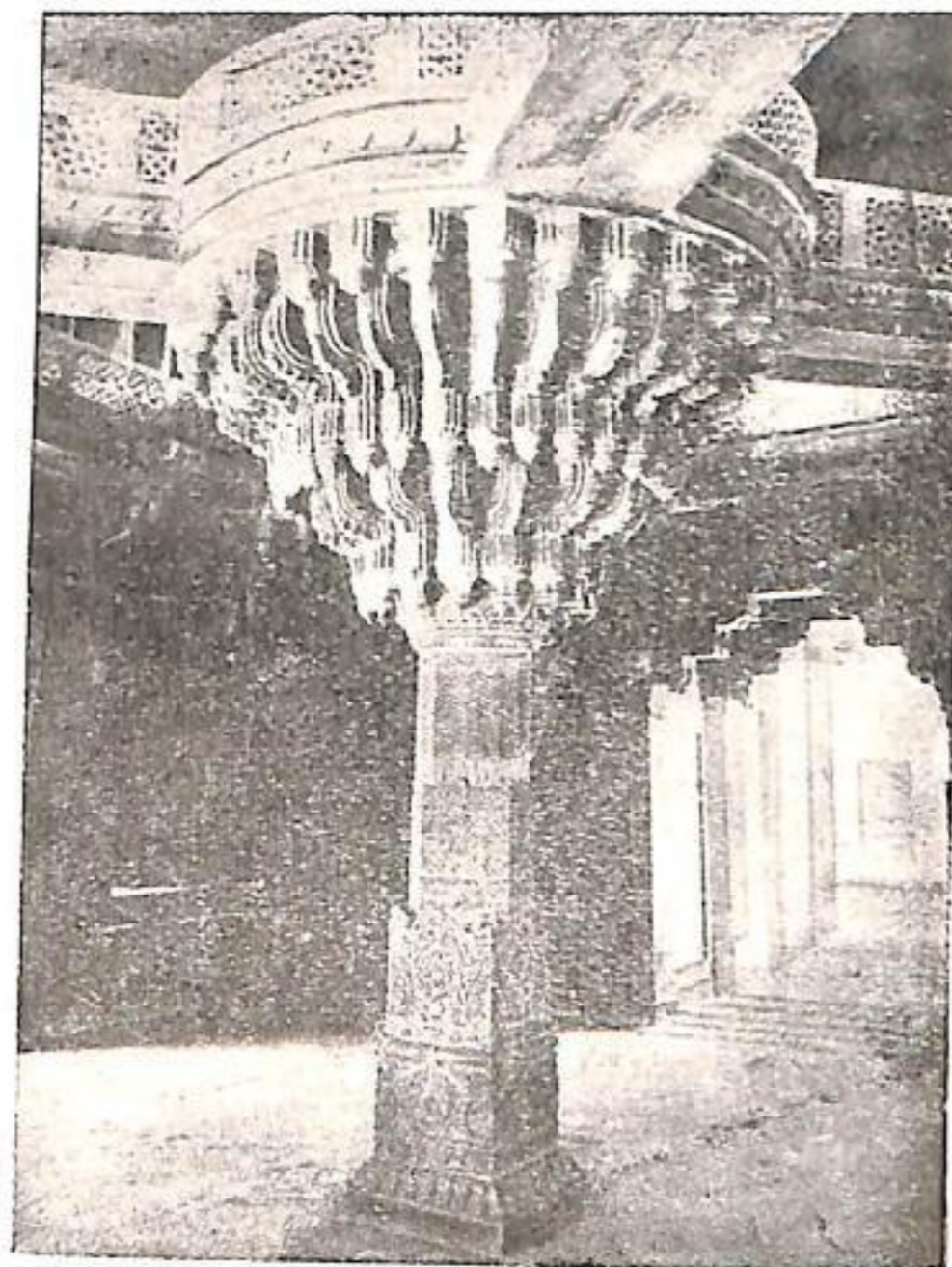
Dewan-i-Khas—The Dewan-i-Khas also known as Ibadat Khana, is a red sand stone edifice of mural designs. It is only a single storeyed building though.



Dewan-i-Khas Fatehpur Sikri.

it appears double storeyed externally. In the centre is a lofty chamber consisting an octagonal column, which is curiously and wonderfully carved. It is surmounted by a gigantic capital of the brackets. The top of the pillar is arranged as a platform from which stone galleries run to other galleries encircling the chamber. Kosks at each corner adorn the flat roof, which is reached by two staircases built in the thickness of the walls.

Ankh Michauli—Adjoining the Dewan-i-Khas



Dewan-i-Khas, Fatehpur Sikri.

towards the west is a three roomed house with staircases leading to the roof. It is supposed to be the place where Empergr Akbar played hide and seek a popular game of amusement with ladies of the harem.

Khas Mahal—Behind the Dewan i-Khas is a block of buildings known as Khas Mahal. It consists of three main portions (1) Khwab Gah (2) Turkish

Sultana's House (3) and Girls' School, all surrounded by cloisters. Khwabgah or Akbar's bed room was



Khas Mahal

reserved for the exclusive use of the Emperor. It was decorated with golden ornamental work. Turkish *Sultana's House* is entirely built of red sand stone and both the interior as well as exterior is ornamented with exquisite carving. The interior part is depicted with sceneries, flowers and birds, most of which were mutilated by Aurangzeb. Turkish Sultana was the first and chief wife of Emperor Akbar and the daughter of Baber's son Hindal. She died childless at Agra in 1626 at the age of 84 years. In the Madarsa Niswan, Girls' school, the girls of Akbar's Harem were given a sort of miscellaneous training. Near these edifices was a bath in the then garden which was built by Akbar for his chief wife.

Daftari Khana—Near about the Khwabgah is the Daftari Khana or the Record room. This was Akbar's office where he used to remain till late in the night attending to the affairs of his vast Empire and issued orders.

Char Chaman—To the south west of Turkish Sultana's house and in the middle of Khas Mahal is the



Char Chaman, Fort Agra

Char Chaman Tank measuring 95 feet square. In the centre of the tank is a platform approachable from all the four sides by small causeways. Here Emperor Akbar sitting on the raised seat on the platform used to entertain.

Panch Mahal—In the west of Khas Mahal appears the celebrated Panch Mahal. It is a five storeyed build-

ding, each upper storey being smaller in dimension than the previous one. This edifice is in the style of a Buddhist Vihara. The ground floor of the building



Panch Mahal, Fort Agra

measures 72 feet by 58 feet and contains 84 columns, characteristic to note that no two columns are alike in their decoration. The first floor has 56 columns, the second 20; the third 12 and the upmost being a kiosk of 4 only. The heights of these storeys are as 1st 49 feet, 2nd 62, 3rd 20, 4th 12 feet and on the 5th a dome is built with four pillars. Images of men plucking fruits and flowers from trees and statues of elephants standing opposite each other are carved according to the Hindu style. The entire structure was probably used as a place of recreation by Akbar with his wives.

Pachchisi—To the north west of the Panch Mahal is the courtyard measuring 756 feet by 272 feet. Here is the court of Pachchisi laid out in black and white squares. An elevated slab in the centre was the seat for Emperor Akbar and other royal players. The gaily dressed slave girls acted as chessmen who moved from square to square according to the directions given by the players,

Astrologer's Seat—To the north west of the Pachchisi is a covered platform in the form of a chhatri, $9\frac{3}{4}$ feet square. It was the seat of a yogi, with whom Emperor Akbar used to spend many hours in talks regarding astrology.

Hospital—A path behind the Ankh Michouli leads to this single storeyed building now in a ruined condition. It is divided into 12 wards measuring 14 feet by $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet. Formerly its roof was exquisitely carved and the doorways and windows were brightly painted.

Maryam's Palace—This splendid double storeyed edifice was built by Akbar for his wife Maryam Uz-



Zamani, who was the sister of Raja Bhagwan Das of Amer and the real mother of Jehangir, to the south of Panch Mahal. Formerly it was decorated with golden ornamental work and was so called as *Sunehari Mahal*. It is profusely carved and the subjects depicted are

markably Hindu. The building stands on a platform and is about 60 feet by 42 feet. There are four rooms in the ground floor and three in the first storey. Over the roof is an open pavilion carved on 8 square columns used for sleeping in rainy nights. Around the palace was a garden enclosed by screen walls. On the south east is a square building which was used as Queen's Bath. No one but authorised persons was permitted to enter the palace and defaulters were sentenced to death.

Jodha Bai's Palace—This palace is situated south west of Maryam's Palace, built by Emperor Akbar for his



son's Hindu wife Jodha Bai. This remarkable edifice is double storeyed having its entrance on the south. The building is $331\frac{3}{4}$ feet by 215 feet. Its influence is noticed both in the architecture as well as in ornamental

carving the bells with chains are freely cut on the stone pieces. Formerly the colourful decorations were lavishly used in this Palace.

Hawa Mahal—A doorway from the Jodha Bai's Palace opens on this palace and it is like one of the parts of Jodha Bai's Palace. It was used for the ladies of seraglio as a pleasure resort during the summer and rainy seasons and from here they used to see the animal fights below.

Beerbal's House—This two storeyed building stands near the north west corner of Jodha Bai's Palace. It



was built by Raja Beerbal according to the wishes of his daughter in 1571 A. D. Beerbal whose original name was Mahesh Dass had an intelligent brain. He was the Prime Minister of the Emperor and one of the nine gems of Akbar's Court. Beerbal is famous for his witty replies even to this day. He was killed in a

campaign against Yusuf-Zai in Bijor. Akbar was so much shocked at his death that for many days he did not take his food. There are two dome-crowned apartments on the two corners of the roof which increase the beauty of the edifice.

Hathi Pole—This gateway is 48 feet by 37 feet and 49 feet high. It is called Hathi Pole or Elephant Gate as the two elephants 13 feet high stood here. They were mutilated by Aurangzeb and the fragments buried in the ground below the gate.

Sangin Burj—Adjoining the Hathi Pole on the north east is the Sangin Burj. The tower was to be extended by Akbar in a name so as to enclose the capital in the shape of a fortress. But the idea was abandoned as Sheikh Salim Chisti was not in favour of it.

Nagina Masjid—Not Very far from the Hathi Pole is a small mosque which was built by Akbar for the use of royal ladies. This mosque consists of an enclosure $33\frac{1}{2}$ feet by $24\frac{1}{2}$ feet open on the south.

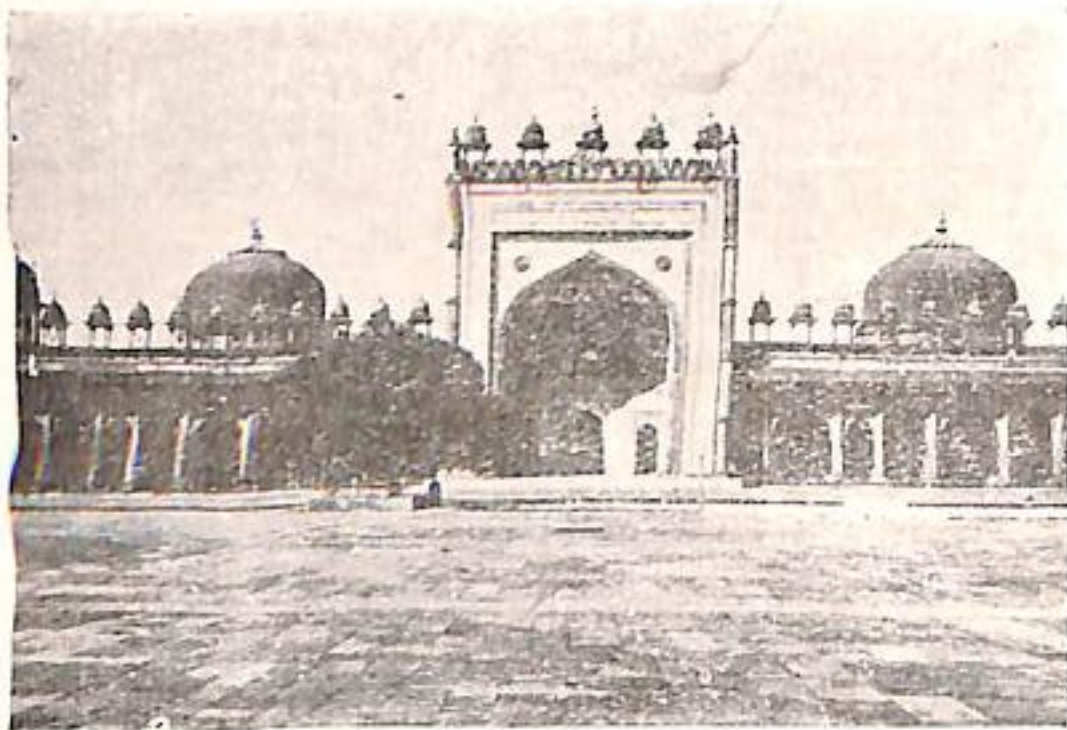
Stable and Sarai—On a road which leads down from Hathi Pole is the royal stable. In it the wonderful horses and camels were tethered to endless rings in sandstone. Here the spaces for 110 horses and 51 camels are marked. Near by it is a vast quadrangle 276 feet by 245 feet built round with small apartments to accommodate the travellers and merchants.



The Hiran Minar (Fatehpur Sikri)

Hiran Minar—The grand tower was erected by Akbar above the remains of his faithful elephant Hiran. It is octagonal at the base, circular in the middle and tapering at the top with a dome crowned capital and is 80 feet high. The middle portion is studded with innumerable elephant tusks in stone looking like big iron nails from a distance. In the interior is a step spiral staircase which leads to the summit of the tower.

Jama Masjid—The mosque is the largest and grandest building in Fatehpur Sikri. It was built by



*Jama
Masjid*

Akbar and its design was copied from the mosque in Mecca according to the suggestion given by Sheikh Salim Chisti. The mosque stands in an enclosure 547 feet by 438 feet and was completed in 1571-72 at a cost of 5 lakhs of rupees. It is said that Akbar after having proclaimed himself the religious head (Imam) presented

the function by reciting on one Friday prayer (Kutba) composed by Faizi but he was over powered with emotion and obliged to descend leaving the Mullah to conclude the service.

Sheikh Salim Chisti's Tomb. In the quadrangle where stands the Jama Masjid in the most sacred edifice built of pure white marble 48 feet square. Here the cenotaph is surrounded by fret work marble screens in floral

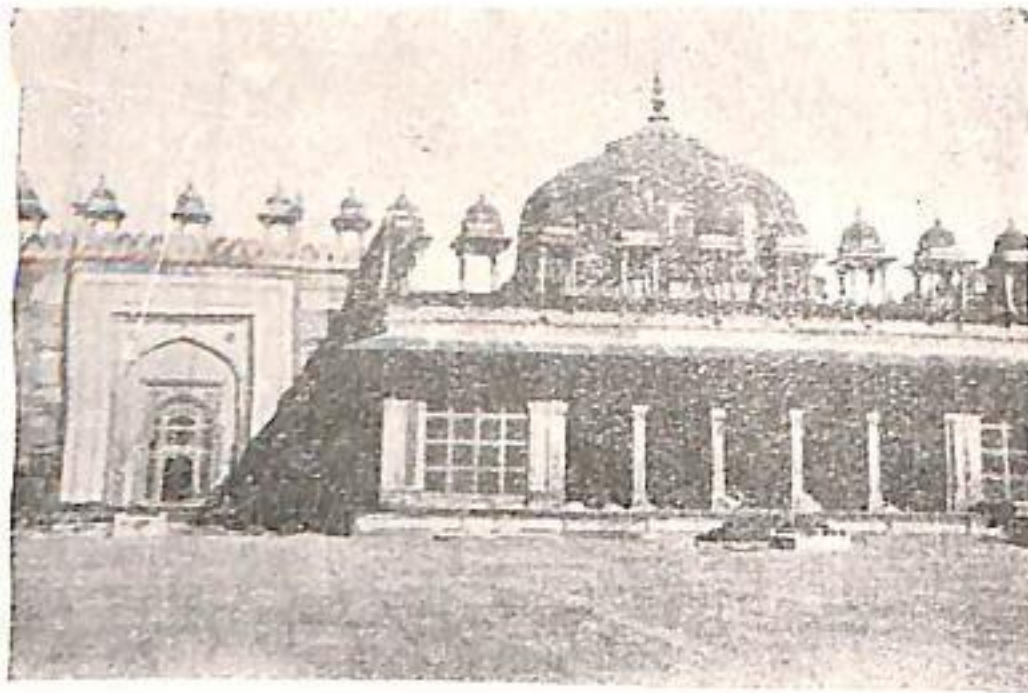


Sheikh Salim Chisti Tomb

designs. The walls are painted with pictures representing beautiful flowers and foliage. Above the cenotaph is an artistic canopy of Shisham wood exquisitely inlaid with mother of pearls. The porch doors are carved in ebony wood. Though this building was built by Emperor Akbar but was beautified by Jehangir. The actual mortal remains of Shiekh Salim chisti are in a vault immediately below the above cenotaph. An inscription on the doorway of the shrine gives the date of death of the saint 1571. It is a place of pilgrimage

honoured even to this day by Mohammedans and yearly thousands of people attend the festival of Urs. Many people bind here the bits of string in bars of the screen believing any wish made in the tomb will be fulfilled. When their wish is realised they come again and take the thread away.

Islam Khan's Tomb—Near the shrine of Sheikh Salim Chisti are other several tombs, worthy of seeing is that of his grandson Islam Khan. He was the gover-

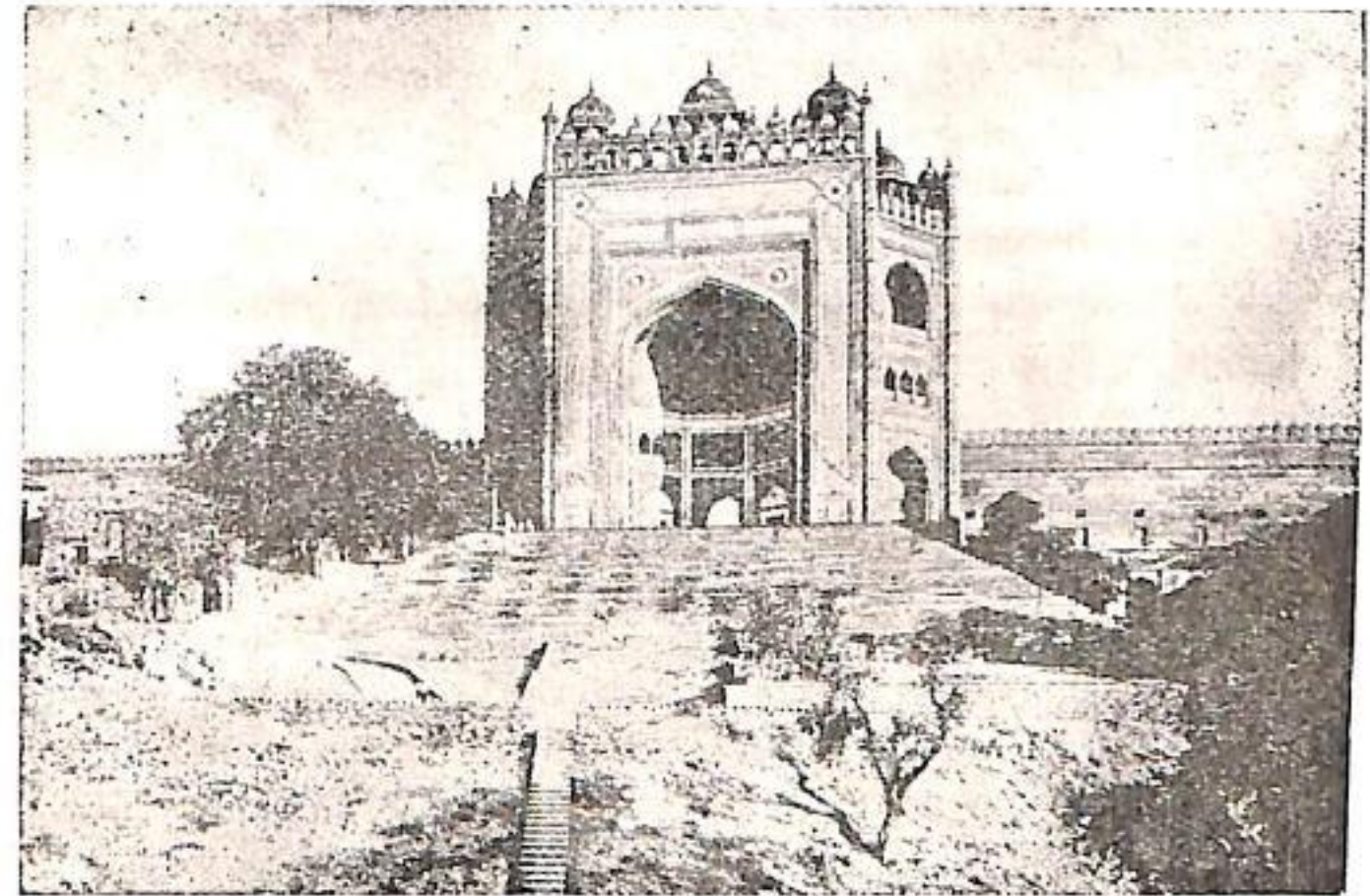


Islam Khan's Tomb

nor of Bengal during Jehangir's reign. His tomb was built by Jehangir after his death. In the neighbourhood lies the Zenana Rauza, which contains the graves of the female descendants of the Sheikh.

Buland Gate—The grand gateway was erected by

Akbar in 1602 A. D. to commemorate his victory over the south India towards the south of the Jama Masjid. It is said to be the grandest gateway in India. The gateway is 176 feet high from the ground level and 134



Buland Gate

feet from its platform. Below the gateway are many stairs increasing the beauty of it. Marble and sand stone have been used in effective combination in its decoration. On this gate are inscribed Arabic Texts which on translation mean "said Jesus—On whom be peace. The world is a bridge, pass over it but build no house. He who hopes for an hour hopes for an eternity. The world is but an hour, spend it in devotion. The

rest is unseen." From the top of this gateway can be seen the general view of the Fatehpur Sikri and the distance view of the Taj.

Baoli—Near the Buland Gate lies the huge well measuring 32 feet in diameter. Here the swimmers hanging about the well appear sufficiently interesting one.

Stone Cutters Mosque—The mosque was erected by the stone cutters of this place before the city of Fatehpur Sikri was founded.

Rang Mahal—Near the stone cutters mosque is a ruined house $9\frac{3}{4}$ feet by $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet. It was the birth place of Emperor Jehangir. It also became the place of penance and abode of Sheikh Salim Chisti.

Houses of Abul Fazal and Faizi—Outside the Buland Gate are the residences of Akbar's dearly loved ministers and of the nine gems. Abul Fazal was a famous historian of his age and Faizi his brother was the Poet Laureate.

GENERAL INFORMATION

General

- (a) Area : 24,506 sq. miles
- (b) Population : 375,665
- (c) Altitude : 553 ft. above sea-level
- (d) Climate : Temperature :

Winter—39.5 to 89°F.

Summer—71.4 to 113.6°F.

Rainfall—25 inches

- (e) Type of clothing required :

Winter—Warm woollen clothing

Summer—Light tropical or cotton clothing

COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORT

- (a) Rail Connections—Agra lies on the main route of the Central Railway and is easily accessible from other major cities, the distances being :

	From	Miles
1.	Delhi	... 122
2.	Bombay	... 835
3.	Calcutta	... 787
4.	Madras	... 1,239
5.	Banaras	... 365
6.	Jaipur	... 150

- (b) Road Connections—Agra is well connected by road with other major cities. The roads are good and motorable. The distances are as follows :

	From	Miles
1.	Delhi	... 126

2. Bombay	..	751
3. Calcutta	...	802
4. Madras	...	1,407
5. Jaipur	...	142
6. Banaras	...	378

TRANSPORT

Taxis—8 to 10 taxis in good condition are available outside the Laurie's Hotel and their rates are as follows :

- (i) Within municipal limits—Re. 1 per mile.
- (ii) Outside municipal limits—As. 11 for the first 40 miles and As. 9 per mile thereafter.
- (iii) Waiting charges—Re 1 per hour or part thereof.
- (iv) Detention charges for the whole day—Rs. 15.

ACCOMMODATION

(a) Hotels

1. Laurie's Hotel

Location —Mahatma Gandhi Road, Agra Cantt.

Daily Charges —Rs. 20 per head

Amenities —Open air swimming pool, miniature golf course and badminton court, bar, etc.

2. Imperial Hotel

Location —Mahatma Gandhi Road, Agra Cantt.

Daily charges —Rs 20 per head

Amenities —Tennis Court, bar, etc.

3. Agra Hotel

Location —Metcalf Road, Agra Cantt. (near the Agra Fort)

Daily charges —Rs. 12 per head with Western style food

Rs. 11 per head with Indian style food

4. Empress Hotel

Location —Mahatma Gandhi Road, Agra Cantt.

Daily charges —Single room—Rs. 12 to Rs. 14 per head

Double room—Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 for two

(b) There is a P. W. D. Inspection House in the city and Dak Bungalows at Fatehpur Sikri and Sikandra. The charges vary from Rs. 2-8 to Rs. 3 per head per day for lodging, charges for meals being according to the tariff with the Khansama attached to these places.

For the reservation of the former contact should be made with the District Engineer, P.W.D. Agra, and for the later with the Superintendent, Department of Archaeology, Northern Circle, Agra.

Academic and Cultural Institutions

1. St. John's College
2. Balwant Rajput College
3. Agra College
4. Agra Medical College
5. Dayalbagh
6. Rotary Club
7. Mascric Lodge
8. Bhai Centre

Places of Worship

1. Churches

- (a) St. George's Church (Anglican)

- (b) St. Mary's Church (Roman Catholic)
- (c) St. Patrick's Church (R. C.)
- (d) St. John's Church
- (e) R. C. Cathedral
- (f) St. Paul's Church
- (g) St. Methodist Church

2. *Temples*

- (a) Man-Kameshwar Temple
- (b) Kailash Temple

3. *Mosques*

- (a) Jama Masjid
- (b) Idgah Mosque

Entertainments

1. *Club* : Agra Club

2. *Cinema House showing Western films* : Imperial Talkies

3. *Restaurants*

- (a) India Coffee House
- (b) Gaylord
- (c) Restaurants attached to the four hotels

Miscellaneous

- (a) *Shopping Centres* : U. P. Government Handicrafts ; Sadar Bazar and Kinari Bazar.
- (b) *Banks* : Imperial Bank ; Allahabad Bank ; Central Bank ; Punjab National Bank ; Hindustan Commercial Bank ; United Commercial Bank ; Bank of Jaipur and Bank of Bikaner.
- (c) *Information Centres* : The Government of India Tourist Information Office, 191, The Mall, Agra.
- (d) *Bookstalls* : Messrs. Wheeler & Co., Bookstalls at Agra Cantt., and Agra Fort Railway Station ; and Messrs. Gaya Prasad & Sons.